



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 23 June 2015 and the information is correct at the time of publication (07:07 P.M., 23 June 2015). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

Questions marked thus **[R]** indicate that a relevant interest has been declared.

Questions with identification numbers of **900000 or greater** indicate that the question was originally tabled as an oral question and has since been unstarred.

ANSWERS

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

■ Adult Education: Liverpool

Mrs Louise Ellman: [\[2529\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, pursuant to the Answer of 15 June 2015 to Question 1656, if he will make an assessment of the effect of changes to the adult skills budget on learners in Liverpool.

Mrs Louise Ellman: [\[2530\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, pursuant to the Answer of 15 June 2015 to Question 1849, which funding bodies his Department is working with to determine how reductions to the adult skills budget will be made; and if he will instruct the funding bodies to look at the effect of changes on learners in Liverpool.

Nick Boles:

As noted in the replies to Questions 1656 and 1849, the Skills Funding Agency allocates funding based on learner demand and the majority of this Department's £450m savings in 2015-16 will be delivered through known underspends and releasing unallocated funding.

FE savings will also be found by cutting low-value expenditure but one of the areas where the FE budget has the greatest impact, apprenticeships, is protected so apprentices in Liverpool, and elsewhere, will not be affected.

Officials in my Department are working with the Skills Funding Agency to determine how other savings can best be achieved in line with ministers' priorities.

We understand that there are pressures across the sector and we have been working through the FE Commissioner to support any colleges that need to redevelop their business plans.

■ Department for Business, Innovation and Skills: Billing

Alan Brown: [\[3264\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what proportion of invoices from suppliers to his Department were paid within 10 days of receipt in (a) March and (b) April 2015.

Anna Soubry:

The proportion of invoices core BIS paid to suppliers within 10 days of receipt in (a) March 2015 and (b) April 2015 was as follows:

March 2015 - 96.20%

April 2015 - 97.86%

■ Investment

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[[3079](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, with reference to recommendation 73 of Lord Heseltine's No Stone Unturned report, published in October 2012, and to paragraph 1.48 of the Government's response to the Heseltine review, published in March 2013, how the Government distinguishes between investment which benefits the UK economy and investment which does not; and if he will make a statement.

Nick Boles:

I refer my Rt hon. Friend to the answer I gave to him on 22 June 2015 to Question UIN [2838](#).

I can also confirm that UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) aims to identify and promote higher value and better quality inward investment projects to generate maximum benefits for the UK. UKTI uses an internal, multi-indicator framework to determine the relative value of all foreign direct investment projects UKTI teams support. These indicators include: total financial value of investment, total number and average salary of new jobs created, Research and Development element involved in investment, HQ function and the role of the UK site, type and quality of the investor and export potential of the investment.

■ Local Government: Aberdeen

Callum McCaig:

[[3127](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, if he will make an assessment of the potential economic benefit of a city region deal to Aberdeen.

Anna Soubry:

The Government committed to initiate discussions with Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire in the Budget in March 2014 and discussions are ongoing. The Government also recognises the significant contribution to the UK economy that Aberdeen makes and believe there are real opportunities to build on that strength to ensure that the economy continues to deliver locally and the economy as a whole.

■ Preservatives: Health Hazards

Mr Laurence Robertson:

[[2640](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what recent assessment he has made of possible health effects on consumers of use of methylchloro isothiazolinone in cosmetics, household goods and industrial items; and if he will make a statement.

Anna Soubry:

The European Commission's Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety (SCCS) has regularly considered MCI both on its own and in a mixture with MI. The SCCS last considered MCI on its own in 2009, and in a mixture with MI in the ratio of 3:1 in 2014

With respect to cosmetics, Methylchloroisothiazolinone (MCI or CMI) can only be used as a permitted preservative under the EU Cosmetic Products Regulation as a mixture of

MCI and Methylisothiazolinone (MI) in a ratio of 3:1 up to a maximum authorised concentration of 0.0015 % in rinse-off cosmetic products.

As the SCCS has recently reviewed the use of MCI, I have made no additional assessment.

■ Space Technology

Mr Nigel Evans:

[\[3012\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what steps his Department is taking to promote the space industry.

Joseph Johnson:

My Department promotes the space industry through the UK Space Agency. It invested £300 million in the space sector last year through its membership of ESA (European Space Agency) and a further £60 million through national space programmes. This investment is used to support crucial commercial investment in technology research and to fund instrumentation for key scientific missions. The Agency also has an education and skills programme that promotes training and apprenticeships, to ensure companies can access skilled space employees. It uses space to inspire young people to pursue STEM careers.

To ensure that the UK capitalises upon new space-based business opportunities, the UK Space Agency is working closely with colleagues in 12 other central government departments, 13 government agencies and the Devolved Administrations. Its programme raises awareness of the growth potential of the space sector, and identifies specific opportunities that complement existing local plans and investments. We are also actively exploring new opportunities that may arise through devolution. In particular, the Agency is supporting the development of clusters of local business and academia through strong links back to the expertise at the UK Space Gateway in Harwell.

We are working in partnership with industry and UKTI to promote the sector to an international audience. In 2014 the UK Space Agency coordinated contributions from 20 companies, including 5 SMEs, in the Space Zone at the Farnborough International Airshow.

We also promote space as a real inspiration to the next generation of scientists and engineers. In May this year, the UK Space Agency appeared at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, where it launched British ESA astronaut Tim Peake's Rocket Science project. This project aims to turn 100,000 school children into space biologists. The event attracted 160,000 visitors. This forms part of our work to demonstrate the educational value of Tim Peake's mission to the International Space Station later this year and the ways in which the science and technology of space has a role in our everyday lives.

This underpinning work in promotion of the sector recognises that real growth is best led by the space sector itself which is why this Government has signed up to ambitious growth targets set in the UK space industry Innovation and Growth Strategy (IGS).

■ Sub Post Offices

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[3257\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what representations his Department has received from current and former sub-postmasters on the performance of the Post Office sub-postmaster mediation scheme; and if he will make a statement.

George Freeman:

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has received a number of written representations from current and former sub-postmasters, both in direct correspondence and through correspondence received via hon Members, regarding Post Office Limited's Complaint Review and Mediation Scheme. This is an operational matter for Post Office Limited and the Scheme has been set up to be independent of Government.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[3258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the Post Office sub-postmaster mediation scheme; and if he will make a statement.

George Freeman:

Post Office Limited's Complaint Review and Mediation Scheme was set up in 2013 to consider cases from current and former subpostmasters relating to the Post Office Horizon IT system. This is an operational matter for Post Office Limited and the Scheme has been set up to be independent of Government.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Elections

Simon Danczuk: [\[2655\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to prevent candidates standing in both local and general elections when those elections are held on the same day.

John Penrose:

[Holding answer 22 June 2015]: The Government has no plans to change the current arrangements in this area.

■ Voting Rights: Young People

Tommy Sheppard: [\[3147\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will make an assessment of the potential effect of extending the franchise in all elections to 16 and 17 year olds on voter turnout.

John Penrose:

Turnout is affected by a wide range of factors and cannot therefore be forecast with any degree of accuracy.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT■ **Adult Education: Greater Manchester**

Andrew Gwynne: [2784]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how much funding has been provided for adult learning in (a) Denton and Reddish constituency, (b) Tameside local authority area and (c) Stockport local authority area in each year since 2010.

Mr Marcus Jones:

Statistics on adult and community learning from Skills Funding Agency grant funding in each local authority are published online in the Revenue Outturn Specific and Special Revenue Grants (RG), which are available at the following link:

<http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-authority-revenue-expenditure-and-financing>

Note that this is the level of funding from this specific grant but will not necessarily represent the full level of expenditure for adult learning within the local authority.

Data is not currently available for 2014-15 and is not available at parliamentary constituency level.

■ **Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill (HL)**

Kevin Brennan: [3160]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what functions he plans to delegate to a combined authority should Clause 6 of the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill pass into law.

Mr Mark Francois:

The Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill is an enabling measure providing for the transfer of existing powers from one public body to another through secondary legislation.

The powers to be devolved in each case will be those agreed in each Deal.

■ **Constituencies**

Mr Nicholas Brown: [2525]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what guidance his Department has issued on interaction between concurrent local government boundary reviews and ongoing parliamentary boundary reviews.

Mr Marcus Jones:

The Department has not issued any such guidance.

■ Council Housing: Empty Property

Emma Reynolds: [\[2513\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 8 June 2015 to Question 1079, if the Government will make an estimate of the vacancy rates of high-value council homes.

Emma Reynolds: [\[2514\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 8 June 2015 to Question 1052, if the Government will make an estimate of the average value of high-value council homes.

Brandon Lewis:

Through the Local Government Transparency Code we require all councils to be more transparent about the value of their social housing stock.

The Department will outline our proposals for the Housing Bill when it is published.

■ Homelessness

Emma Reynolds: [\[2539\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment his Department has made of the consequences for his Department's policies of the Supreme Court judgement of 13 May 2015 on *Kanu v. London Borough of Southwark*.

Emma Reynolds: [\[2540\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what discussions his Department has had with local authorities on the Supreme Court judgement of 13 May 2015 on *Kanu v. London Borough of Southwark*.

Emma Reynolds: [\[2541\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what guidance his Department has issued to local authorities on the Supreme Court judgement of 13 May 2015 on *Kanu v. London Borough of Southwark*.

Mr Marcus Jones:

We welcomed the judgement in *Kanu v London Borough of Southwark*.

We maintain a constant dialogue with local authorities on matters that could affect them and their ability to help vulnerable people.

■ Housing: Prices

Gloria De Piero: [\[2410\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will estimate the change in average house prices in (a) England, (b) East Midlands, (c) Nottingham and (d) Ashfield constituency in each of the last 10 years.

Brandon Lewis:

Annual statistics on median house prices in England, local authority districts and parliamentary constituencies, based on land Registry data, are published by the Office for National Statistics, and are available at the following link.

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/regional-analysis/house-price-statistics-for-small-areas/1995-2013/index.html>

■ **Right to Buy Scheme**

Matthew Pennycook:

[2981]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what discussions he has had with the G15 group of London housing associations on the potential effects of the planned extension of the right-to-buy scheme for housing association tenants.

Brandon Lewis:

Officials have met with a number of housing associations on an individual basis and further meetings are planned.

Details of Ministers' meetings and those of the Permanent Secretary with external organisations are published on-line

here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dclg-ministerial-data>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dclg-permanent-secretary-data-2014#history>

Helen Jones:

[3189]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what discussions he has had with (a) housing associations and (b) lenders on the potential effects of the extension of the right to buy scheme on the credit ratings and ability to access credit of housing associations; and if he will make a statement.

Brandon Lewis:

Officials have met with a number of housing associations on an individual basis and further meetings are planned.

Details of Ministers' meetings and those of the Permanent Secretary with external organisations are published on-line here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dclg-ministerial-data>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dclg-permanent-secretary-data-2014#history>

■ **Right to Buy Scheme: Warrington**

Helen Jones:

[3187]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will estimate the average loss to housing associations in (a) rental income over a period of 25 years and (b)

capital for each housing association property sold under the proposed extension of the right to buy scheme in Warrington.

Helen Jones:

[3188]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many properties in (a) Warrington and (b) Warrington North constituency will qualify for sale to existing tenants under the proposed extension of the right to buy scheme to housing association tenants; and if he will estimate the average price on the open market of those properties.

Brandon Lewis:

The development of the policy is ongoing, and details will be set out in due course.

■ Social Rented Housing

Ben Howlett:

[1972]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what plans he has to ensure neighbourhoods with a concentration of social housing do not suffer from educational underperformance and high accident and obesity rates; and what plans he has to foster a sense of community in such neighbourhoods.

Mr Marcus Jones:

We are continuing to roll out the Our Place approach – a neighbourhood level, partnership-based approach to service transformation with the community at its heart – across England, with a £1 million grant fund to support up to another 115 areas during 2015/16. This builds on the successes and lessons learned from the 12 pioneer areas and 117 areas previously supported to improve local services. Some of these areas developed new approaches to tackle poor educational attainment and high obesity rates and many of them operate in neighbourhoods with a high index of multiple deprivation.

We are extending this work in 2015/16 through a new First Steps programme which will support 115 areas that are not yet ready for the Our Place approach to produce a Community Action Plan setting out the priorities for their area and how they might go about tackling them.

Additionally my Department's tenant involvement strategy enables social housing tenants to influence, challenge and take control of their housing services, putting communities in control and delivering localism to some of the most challenging areas.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Broadband: North Devon

Peter Heaton-Jones:

[1157]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he plans to take in further extending the availability of superfast broadband in North Devon constituency.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

Superfast broadband coverage is available to over 80% of UK premises and the Government remains committed to providing 95% coverage to homes and businesses by December 2017.

Commercial broadband delivery is expected to cover 13,862 premises in the North Devon constituency. By the end of the Connecting Devon and Somerset project, coverage is expected to have increased to 39,744 premises.

This data is included in the table in the House of Commons Library:

http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/business-papers/commons/deposited-papers/?house=1&search_term=Department+for+Culture%2c+Media+and+Sport&itemd=122028#toggle-163

■ Broadband: South Suffolk**James Cartlidge:****[1608]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many additional premises in South Suffolk constituency were connected to high speed broadband services in each of the last three years.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

In South Suffolk constituency commercial broadband delivery is estimated to cover 19,252 (45%) of homes and businesses. By the end of the Better Broadband for Suffolk project, coverage is expected to have increased to over 36,800 (86%) of premises.

In the Better Broadband for Suffolk project over 117,000 homes and businesses across the county will benefit from public investment. As of March 2015, the project had already reached over 70,600 premises.

The Department deposited data in the House of Commons Library which estimates commercial coverage and coverage supported by public investment in constituencies by the end of 2017. The table can be found here:

http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/business-papers/commons/deposited-papers/?house=1&search_term=Department+for+Culture%2c+Media+and+Sport&itemd=122028#toggle-163

The Department does not monitor roll-out at constituency level. However, Ofcom publishes annual data on coverage at county level. The following data taken from Ofcom Infrastructure Reports indicates coverage in Suffolk between 2012 and 2014. Ofcom calculated 2012-14 coverage figures using different methodologies and in 2014 produced two sets of figures. Further details can be found on the Ofcom website:

<http://maps.ofcom.org.uk/>

COUNTY	PROPORTION OF HOUSEHOLDS IN POSTCODES SERVED BY NGA NETWORKS 2012	PROPORTION OF PREMISES IN POSTCODES SERVED BY NGA NETWORKS 2013	PROPORTION OF PREMISES ABLE TO RECEIVE NGA BROADBAND SERVICES 2014	AVAILABILITY OF SUPERFAST BROADBAND (30+MBIT/S) 2014
Suffolk	45%	59%	68%	64%

■ Broadband: Torbay

Kevin Foster: [1110]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what progress his Department has made on broadband black-spots and harder to help areas in Torbay constituency.

Kevin Foster: [1111]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what progress his Department has made on rolling out broadband coverage in Torbay.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

Current superfast broadband coverage is over 80% of UK premises and the Government remains committed to providing 95% coverage to homes and businesses by December 2017. This is an increase from 45% coverage in 2010.

Commercial broadband delivery is expected to cover 44,575 premises in the Torbay constituency. By the end of the Connecting Devon and Somerset project, coverage is expected to have increased to 49,101 premises.

This data is included in the table in the House of Commons Library:

http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/business-papers/commons/deposited-papers/?house=1&search_term=Department+for+Culture%2c+Media+and+Sport&item_id=122028#toggle-163

■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Families

Mr David Burrowes: [1191]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the Prime Minister's press release of 18 August 2014, what steps he is taking to assess the impact of his Department's policies on the family.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Family Test was announced by the Prime Minister in August 2014 and introduced in October 2014 through the publication of guidance for officials - [Family Test Guidance](#)

The objective of the Test is to introduce a family perspective to the policy making process, specifically to make the potential impacts on family functioning and relationships explicit.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has not applied the Test to date. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport is working with the DWP to embed the Test in the policymaking process.

■ Internet: Children

Fiona Bruce: [\[972\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what his timetable is for requiring age verification for relevant websites in order to prevent children's exposure to harmful sexualised content online.

Fiona Bruce: [\[975\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he plans to take to stop children's exposure to harmful sexualised content online by requiring age verification for relevant websites for websites based (a) in and (b) outside the UK.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Government is considering its approach to delivering this commitment, and will share its plans in due course. Helping parents to protect their children from inappropriate and harmful content online remains a top priority, building on measures implemented under the previous Government including easy to use parental control filters in the home.

Ministers will engage with the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) and other key stakeholders as they develop this policy.

■ Music

Kerry McCarthy: [\[2069\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of Attitude is Everything's Charter of Best Practice for live music events.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

Attitude is Everything's Charter of Best Practice is a positive contribution to improving deaf and disabled people's access to, and enjoyment of, live music. It is essential that cultural events are accessible to everyone, so it is encouraging to hear that over 90 venues have signed up to the Charter.

■ Pornography: Internet

Fiona Bruce: [\[974\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate he has made of the proportion of online pornography accessed in the UK which is from websites based (a) in and (b) outside the UK.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

I have not made an estimate, however Government is aware that pornographic content online originates from many countries across the world, and has taken this into account in developing policy supporting network level filters.

■ **UN Convention for Protection of Cultural Property in Event of Armed Conflict**

Mr Nicholas Brown:

[\[1800\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what his policy is on UK ratification of the 1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

My Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport places great importance on the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and will make the case to ministerial colleagues for introducing the necessary legislation to allow UK ratification at the earliest opportunity.

DEFENCE

■ **Afghanistan and Iraq: Private Military and Security Companies**

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[\[2876\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 3 June 2015 to Question 337, how many private companies were employed by his Department in (a) Iraq and (b) Afghanistan in each of the last five years; what services each such company provided; and if he will make a statement.

Penny Mordaunt:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 2 June 2015 to Question 207.

Attachments:

1. Ministry of Defence: Private Military and Security [Hansard Extract 2 June 2015 HOC 2876.doc]

■ **Armed Forces: Deployment**

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[\[2510\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the current military operations being conducted by British Armed Forces are by (a) number of personnel and (b) mission.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Ministry of Defence currently has around 4,000 personnel deployed on over 20 overseas operations. These include:

Over 2,300 personnel supporting our Middle Eastern presence, including approximately 770 personnel involved in operations to counter ISIL, with a further 125 deploying shortly.

Around 530 personnel supporting the UK's search and rescue effort in the Mediterranean in response to the migrant crisis.

Around 470 personnel in non-combat roles in Afghanistan.

Over 270 personnel on a variety of operations in Africa, including around 200 personnel deployed for the Ebola crisis.

250 military personnel in support of UN forces in Cyprus.

120 military personnel deployed on NATO Baltic Air Policing.

90 military personnel deployed in Nepal following the recent earthquake.

30 military personnel deployed on capacity building in Mali in support of the EU and UN training missions.

50 military personnel in Ukraine providing training for the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

We do not disclose details of all ongoing operations as disclosure would, or would be likely to prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

■ Armed Forces: Firearms

Andrew Gwynne: [\[2466\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many firearms owned by his Department (a) were lost or stolen and (b) are otherwise unaccounted for at facilities in the UK in the last two years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) takes the security of firearms and ammunition very seriously and has robust procedures to deter and prevent losses and thefts. Given the dynamic nature of military activity, it is impossible to entirely mitigate all risks. Nevertheless, all losses and thefts of firearms and ammunition are fully and rigorously investigated, in partnership as necessary with civilian police forces.

The numbers lost and stolen over the past two years are shown below. For context, the MOD owns and operates around 360,000 firearms.

	LOST (UNACCOUNTED FOR)	STOLEN	TOTAL
2013	11	3	14
2014	4	4	8
Total	15	7	22

■ Armoured Fighting Vehicles

Mrs Madeleine Moon: [\[2857\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 8 June 2015, to Question 1093, which companies hold contracts for the building of the remaining Scout

Specialist vehicles; what the value of each such contract is; when he expects the contracts for those vehicles to end; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The contract for the manufacturing phase of the Scout Specialist Vehicle (SV) programme was awarded to General Dynamics UK Limited (GD UK) in September 2014. GD UK, as the prime contractor, is responsible for the selection and management of its supply chain. Its detailed breakdown of GD UK's subcontractors, including contract values and end dates, is commercially sensitive and not held by the Department. The supply chain for the acquisition of the Scout SV includes countries from across the globe, but over 60% of the contract value is based in the UK, including 160 UK based companies.

■ Defence

Ian C. Lucas:

[\[3240\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, which UK treaty obligations will be taken into account in development of the Strategic Defence Review.

Michael Fallon:

The Strategic Defence and Security Review will take account of all UK treaty obligations.

■ Libya: Armed Forces

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[\[3198\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will place in the Library the internal Ministry of Defence and Home Office review report on Libyan training at Bassingbourn; and if he will make a statement.

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[\[3199\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will place in the Library notes and minutes of meetings between representatives of his Department and Cambridge City councillors on the effect on the local community of basing Libyan personnel at Bassingbourn; and if he will make a statement.

Penny Mordaunt:

I have already placed in the Library the summary of the independent report into the Libyan training at Bassingbourn. There are a number of sensitivities surrounding the documents relating to the meetings and Ministry of Defence officials are currently engaging with Departments across Government and with the Libyan Embassy, to consider whether they can be released. If they are deemed releasable I will place copies in the Library of the House in due course.

I would also like to refer the hon. Member to the written statement made by the previous Defence Secretary (Philip Hammond) on 11 June 2014 (Official Report, column 49-50WS) and the written statements made by the Defence Secretary (Michael Fallon) on 4 November 2014 (Official Report, column 44WS), and 9 January 2015 (Official Report, column 18WS) in relation to the Libyan General Purpose Force.

Attachments:

1. WMS - 11 Jun14 Training Libyan Troops in the UK
[20140611_WMS_Training_Libyan_Troops_in_the_UK.doc]
2. WMS - 4 Nov 14 Libya Update [20141104_WMS_Libya_Update.doc]
3. WMS - 9 Jan 15 Libya Training Report [20150109_WMS_Libya_Training_Report.doc]

■ Military Aid: Procurement

Mrs Madeleine Moon: [\[2852\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 11 June 2015 to Question 1095, how many contracts to provide any form of military training in conflict zones were awarded to (a) private security companies and (b) other companies in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement.

Penny Mordaunt:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 11 June 2015 to Question 1095. Ministry of Defence (MOD) commercial officers are also aware of two contracts relating to training with respect to conflict zones. These were for interpreter services firstly in support of UK training in the Ukraine and secondly for the selection in Tripoli and training at Basingbourn of Libyan soldiers. More broadly, information on MOD contracts is not recorded in a way that would allow an automatic search to identify those relating to conflict zones, or to training. A manual search would incur disproportionate cost.

Attachments:

1. 20150611 - QnA extract on Iraq: Military Aid
[20150611_1095_Iraq_Military_Aid.doc]

Mrs Madeleine Moon: [\[2858\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 11 June 2015, to Question 1095, how many times the classification of private security companies contracted to provide services in conflict zones was changed to training companies in each year since 2010; and if he will make a statement.

Penny Mordaunt:

A company's 'classification' is neither considered nor detailed as part of the procurement process and therefore would not be changed. The suitability of companies in other respects (eg legal and financial compliance) is considered before a contract is let.

■ Nimrod Aircraft

George Kerevan: [\[3244\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what progress his Department has made in seeking a replacement for the Nimrod aircraft for the RAF's maritime reconnaissance capability; and what alternative aircraft platforms are under elevation for this role.

Penny Mordaunt:

No decision has been taken to acquire a maritime patrol aircraft, and we have been clear for some time that the right point to look again at the requirement is in the Strategic

Defence and Security Review, which is now under way. The capabilities required from such an aircraft have been studied by the Ministry of Defence over the past two and a half years, and during that time we have received representations from a number of defence industrial organisations

■ Strategic Defence and Security Review

Ian C. Lucas: [\[3241\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what plans he has for public consultation on the contents of the Strategic Defence and Security Review.

Ian C. Lucas: [\[3250\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will consult political parties which are not in government on development of the Strategic Defence and Security Review.

Michael Fallon:

In the Queen's Speech on 27 May 2015, the Government made clear its intention to conduct a full Strategic Defence and Security Review. Led by the Cabinet Office, the Government will consult with interested parties including Parliamentarians to inform our decision-making.

Ian C. Lucas: [\[3252\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to consult businesses as part of the Strategic Defence and Security Review.

Michael Fallon:

In the Queen's Speech on 27 May 2015, the Government made clear its intention to conduct a full Strategic Defence and Security Review. Led by the Cabinet Office, the Government will consult with interested parties, including businesses. The Ministry of Defence is leading on engagement with the defence industry.

Ian C. Lucas: [\[3253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how he plans to liaise with other government departments on the development of the Strategic Defence and Security Review.

Michael Fallon:

The Strategic Defence and Security Review is being coordinated by the Cabinet Office with close engagement with all relevant Government Departments.

■ Ukraine: Military Aid

Mr Charles Walker: [\[3053\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to Paragraph 12 of the European Parliament resolution on the situation in Ukraine (2014/2965(RSP)), if he will take steps to provide (a) communications equipment, (b) night vision equipment and range finders and (c) other non-lethal military equipment to Ukraine; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Charles Walker: [\[3054\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what discussions he has had with Ukraine on providing forces in that country with non-lethal military equipment.

Mr Charles Walker: [\[3055\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what discussions he has made with his EU and NATO counterparts on providing non-lethal military equipment to Ukraine.

Michael Fallon:

The UK has provided a range of non-lethal equipment to Ukraine. I refer the hon. Member to the statement I made on 6 March 2015 (Official Report, column 83WS) and the statement made on 17 October 2014 (Official Report, column 55WS). I regularly discuss support to Ukraine with NATO and EU counterparts and expect to do so at the next NATO Defence Ministers meeting on 24-25 June. Officials continue to engage with the Ukraine Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces on further requirements including the provision of training and wider support.

Attachments:

1. WMS - 17 Oct 2014 - Gifting of non-lethal Eqpt [20141017_WMS_Gifting_of_non-lethal_Equipment_to_Ukraine.doc]
2. WMS - 6 March 2015 - Support to Ukraine [20150306_WMS_Support_to_Ukraine.doc]

■ **USA: Military Bases**

Fabian Hamilton: [\[2919\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will take steps to ensure that illegal monitoring of private telecommunications does not take place on US military bases in the UK.

Penny Mordaunt:

Activities at RAF bases made available to the United States Visiting Forces are, and will continue to be, carried out in accordance with both UK and US law.

EDUCATION

■ **Children: Supported Housing**

Alex Cunningham: [\[2531\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to raise standards in supported accommodation for children aged under 18.

Alex Cunningham: [\[2532\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many homeless children aged under 18 are living independently in supported accommodation in each UK region.

Edward Timpson:

Data is published annually on the number of looked after 16 and 17 year olds living in a range of semi-independent and independent accommodation. Data for the year ending 31 March 2014 is available in table A3 of the children looked after Statistical First Release, which can be accessed via the link below:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/410394/SFR36_2014_National_tables_revised.xlsx

In order to drive improvements in the quality of support provided to care leavers, Ofsted inspections of local authorities' children's social care services now include a separate sub-judgement on care leavers, which includes an assessment of whether the local authority is ensuring that care leavers have access to suitable accommodation.

In particular, Ofsted inspects whether:

- accommodation for care leavers is appropriate for each young person to safely develop their independence skills;
- care leavers are safe and feel safe, particularly where they are living;
- care leavers are helped to find housing solutions that best meet their needs; and
- risks of tenancy breakdown are identified and alternative plans are in place.

This guidance was strengthened in 2015 to make clear that Bed and Breakfast accommodation should only be used in exceptional circumstances and for no more than 2 working days.

Through the Innovation Programme we are testing new ways of helping care leavers to make a successful transition to adulthood, including providing more than £2 million to North Yorkshire County Council to develop its 'No Wrong Door' service. This service will provide a consistent, trusted adviser for young people who have been in residential care after they move into supported accommodation, providing them with help and advice and working with housing providers to make the transition to independent living smoother.

English Baccalaureate**Kevin Brennan:**[\[3191\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether the expectation that all students should take Ebacc subjects applies to university technical college and studio school students.

Nick Gibb:

We want all pupils to study rigorous academic subjects which give them the best start in life and help to keep their options open. We acknowledge that the EBacc will be inappropriate for a small minority of pupils, and we will work with the sector to identify them and consider what is expected for them. We plan to consult on detailed proposals in the autumn.

■ Mathematics and Science: Teachers

Louise Haigh: [2759]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many qualified (a) science and (b) mathematics teachers there are on average per school in each constituency.

Nick Gibb:

The information is not available in the format requested.

■ Mathematics: GCSE

Cat Smith: [2639]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the accreditation process for GCSE Mathematics in ensuring appropriate standards.

Nick Gibb:

Ofqual has carried out a programme of research to review the awarding organisations' sample assessment materials for the new Mathematics GCSEs with a particular emphasis on comparability and an appropriate standard of demand. Ofqual published the outcomes of this research on 21 May and awarding organisations are revising their sample assessment materials. Information regarding this can be found at www.gov.uk/government/news/actions-in-response-to-ofquals-gcse-maths-research-report

■ Mental Health Services: Children and Young People

Mr Barry Sheerman: [3206]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Health about child and adolescent mental health services in England; and what the conclusion was of those discussions.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

As the Minister in the Department for Education with specific responsibility for children and young people's mental health issues I have recently met my counterpart in Department of Health (DH), Alastair Burt.

We have confirmed that our departments will continue to work closely together on reforms to children and young people's mental health services following the publication in March of 'Future in Mind', the report of the work of the DH and NHS England task force on children and young people's mental health and well-being. Joined up action across health, education and children's services will help to make sure that understanding of mental health is on an equal footing with physical health, that mental health issues are not stigmatising for children and young people, and that services are accessible where support is needed and responsive to the needs of individuals.

The Department for Education is already committing £1.5m to the development of a joint training pilot with NHS England to train mental health leads in schools and specialist child and adolescent mental health services. In addition the department is

providing funding worth £4.7m this year to support 17 projects delivering a wide range of support across the country to children and young people with mental health issues. The department has also funded PSHE Association guidance on teaching about mental health in PSHE which was published in March 2015. This will be followed by a set of lesson plans spanning key stages 1-4 which will be available for schools before the end of the summer term.

■ Schools

Kevin Brennan:

[\[3077\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will publish in one place on gov.uk where each school is located, each school's unique reference number and local authority establishment number, the URL for each such school's page on her Department's school and college performance tables website, the URL for each such page on Ofsted's Inspection Report website, the name of the company which has an academy funding agreement, and the Companies House registration number of each of those companies.

Edward Timpson:

Most of this information is already available in the one place. Since 2011, as part of the government's transparency agenda, the performance website expanded greatly. The location of each school and its unique reference number are shown on each school's entry on the School Performance Tables website. This page also provides PDF versions of academy funding agreements, annual reports and financial statements which contain the name of the company with whom the Secretary of State has a funding agreement and its Companies House registration number. The Ofsted inspection reports website provides a direct link to each school's performance tables entry under 'further links'.

We regularly review the content and functionality of our website and will consider whether it would be helpful to add each school's local authority establishment number to the website.

■ Science: Education

Mr Nigel Evans:

[\[3013\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that the education system encourages gender equality in science.

Nick Gibb:

There are positive signs that more girls are choosing to study science. Since 2010, A Level entries by girls rose across science subjects: for physics the rise is 16%; for chemistry 23%; and for biology 16%. The Department for Education has reviewed the national curriculum to ensure that it sets expectations which are equal to those set in the highest-performing education jurisdictions in the world. The new science curriculum provides the opportunity for teachers to highlight the achievements and contributions of women in science and reaffirms the need for schools to take account of their duties under equalities legislation.

The Department funds the Stimulating Physics Network to increase take up of A Level physics, particularly among girls. The Department also funds Engineering UK to deliver a programme of Big Bang Near Me activities, local versions of the national Big Bang Science and Engineering Fair, to over 80,000 young people with an equal split of boys and girls. The STEM Ambassadors Programme, funded by the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills, has over 40% women ambassadors and helps to raise awareness among children of the range of careers that science can offer. The Your Life campaign, which was launched by the government in November 2014, will aim to change the perceptions of science and mathematics among all young people, but with a focus on girls.

■ Teachers: Nottinghamshire

Gloria De Piero: [\[2405\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the total cost to state-funded schools of hiring agency teachers was in (a) Ashfield constituency and (b) Nottinghamshire in each year since 2010.

Nick Gibb:

The available information for the expenditure on agency supply teaching staff is shown in the tables below.

Local Authority Maintained Schools

EXPENDITURE ON AGENCY SUPPLY STAFF

(1)(2)(3)

2010-11 to 2013-14

Ashfield Parliamentary Constituency

	Nursery schools (4)	Primary schools	Secondary schools	Special schools	Pupil referral units (5)	Total
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
2013-14	0	585	137	0	36	758
2012-13	0	528	202	40	..	771
2011-12	2	534	166	21	..	724
2010-11	1	594	339	7	..	942

EXPENDITURE ON AGENCY SUPPLY STAFF**(1)(2)(3)**

1. The detailed definition of every income and expenditure category is available on the department's website at the following link:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/consistent-financial-reporting-framework-2013-to-2014

2. School expenditure data is provided by local authority maintained schools only. It does not contain data on academies. Therefore the income and expenditure figures are affected by the numbers of schools converting to academy status. In particular this affects the figures for secondary schools and makes year on year comparisons difficult.

3. Cash terms figures as reported by schools.

4. The data for nursery schools does not include all nursery provision. In particular it does not include private sector, voluntary and independent nursery providers.

5. The collection of data from pupil referral units was made mandatory in 2013-14.

.. Not available for this year.

Expenditure on agency supply staff (1)(2)(3)

**2010-11 to
2013-14**

Nottinghamshire local authority

	Nursery schools (4)	Primary schools	Secondary schools	Special schools	Pupil referral units (5)	Total
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
2013-014		3,322	454	273	0	4,049
2012-013		2,749	1,336	122	..	4,208
2011-212		2,476	3,094	75	..	5,647
2010-1		2,484	4,467	67	..	7,019

EXPENDITURE ON AGENCY SUPPLY STAFF (1)(2)(3)

11

1. The detailed definition of every income and expenditure category is available on the department's website at the following link:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/consistent-financial-reporting-framework-2013-to-2014

2. School expenditure data is provided by local authority maintained schools only. It does not contain data on academies. Therefore the income and expenditure figures are affected by the numbers of schools converting to academy status. In particular this affects the figures for secondary schools and makes year on year comparisons difficult.

3. Cash terms figures as reported by schools.

4. The data for nursery schools does not include all nursery provision. In particular it does not include private sector, voluntary and independent nursery providers.

5. The collection of data from pupil referral units was made mandatory in 2013-14.

.. Not available for this year.

Academies and Free Schools

EXPENDITURE ON AGENCY SUPPLY STAFF

Academic Years 2010-11 to 2013-14

Ashfield Parliamentary Constituency

	Single Academy Trusts £000s	Multi Academy Trusts £000s	Total £000s
2013-14 (8)
2012-13	200	..	200

EXPENDITURE ON AGENCY SUPPLY STAFF

2011-12	0	..	0
2010-11 (9)

6. Based on the accounts of academy trusts which had been open the entirety of the academic year.

7. Multi-academy trusts are only included where all schools within the trust were open for the full academic year (September to August).

8. Figures for 2013-14 are being collected and will be available in July 2015.

9. Figures for 2010-11 were included as part of overall expenditure on supply teaching staff. Figures specifically for agency supply staff are not available.

10. Local authority level and parliamentary constituency area data are not available for multi-academy trusts.

.. Not available.

EXPENDITURE ON AGENCY SUPPLY STAFF**Academic Years 2010-11 to 2013-14****Nottinghamshire local authority**

Single Academy Trusts (6)	Multi Academy Trusts (7)	Total (10)
£000s	£000s	£000s

EXPENDITURE ON AGENCY SUPPLY STAFF

2013-14 (8)
2012-13	1,048	..	1,048
2011-12	468	..	468
2010-11 (9)

6. Based on the accounts of academy trusts which had been open the entirety of the academic year.

7. Multi-academy trusts are only included where all schools within the trust were open for the full academic year (September to August).

8. Figures for 2013-14 are being collected and will be available in July 2015.

9. Figures for 2010-11 were included as part of overall expenditure on supply teaching staff. Figures specifically for agency supply staff are not available.

10. Local authority level and parliamentary constituency area data are not available for multi-academy trusts.

.. Not available.

■ Vocational Guidance

Mr David Anderson:

[\[2994\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to improve the performance of careers services.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

It is essential that all young people leave school fully prepared for life in modern Britain. All schools should have a clear strategy for careers guidance which inspires pupils about a range of ambitious careers. We have set this expectation through revised statutory

guidance, which underpins schools' duty to secure independent careers guidance. In addition, a new employer-led Careers and Enterprise Company will encourage greater collaboration between schools and colleges and employers, helping young people to access the best advice and inspiration.

The National Careers Service provides over 1 million people annually with impartial and professional careers information advice and guidance to help them enter work, learning or progress in life. Last year the National Careers Service went through a complete reconfiguration with all its contracts procured through a comprehensive open and competitive tendering process. The new contracts awarded in October 2014 are on a payment by results basis. 94% of face-to-face and telephone customers agreed that the overall quality of the service was good.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

Alex Cunningham:

[2966]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, how many measures of each type in each region have been installed under the Green Deal since it was introduced.

Andrea Leadsom:

The attached table shows how many measures of each type have been installed by region using Green Deal Finance up to end March 2015, based on the number of Green Deal Plans that were 'live' by the end of April 2015. This was reported in Table 3a in the following National statistic release:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/green-deal-and-energy-company-obligation-eco-monthly-statistics-may-2015>.

■ Carbon Emissions

Kerry McCarthy:

[3247]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what steps the Government will be taking in the (a) short, (b) medium and (c) long-term to achieve the G7's goal of decarbonising the global economy by the end of this century.

Andrea Leadsom:

Climate change is one of the most serious threats facing our world. It is not just a threat to the environment. It is also a threat to national and global security, poverty eradication and economic prosperity.

In their June statement G7 Leaders recognised that the science is clear, that we need to hold the increase in average global temperature to below 2 degrees C, and that the world therefore needs deep cuts in global greenhouse gas emissions, to transform energy sectors and to advance decarbonisation of the global economy over the course of this century.

The UK is doing its part. We were the first country to put in place a legally binding long-term target, and we have established five year carbon budgets for reducing emissions into the late 2020s. We met our first carbon budget last year, and according to our latest projections we are on track to meet the next two carbon budgets

All others also need to do their fair share too, which is why UK is working to influence other countries to take action, to secure a new global in Paris and by providing assistance to those developing countries who need it to reduce their emissions, especially the poorest and most vulnerable.

■ Carbon Sequestration

David T. C. Davies: [2423]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what timetable she has set for the completion of the carbon capture and storage commercialisation competition; and what progress her Department has made towards the announcement of a contract for difference for carbon capture and storage.

Andrea Leadsom:

Under the CCS Commercialisation Programme, the Government is supporting the Peterhead and White Rose CCS projects to complete their detailed project designs. The companies involved are expected to make final investment decisions in late 2015, with Government taking a decision in the first quarter of 2016. Subject to final investment decisions, Government has made up to £1bn available to offset the capital cost of the projects and further support will be available through a tailored Contract for Difference.

■ Coal Fired Power Stations

David T. C. Davies: [2425]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what information her Department holds on which coal-fired power plants will be available for electricity generation in (a) 2017, (b) 2020 and (c) 2023; and what the generating capacity in mega watts will be for each plant in each of those years.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Department's Updated Emissions and Energy Projections published in 2014 includes an estimate for the total amount of available coal-fired electricity generation capacity in Great Britain:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/368021/Updated_energy_and_emissions_projections2014.pdf.

The relevant figures are:

	2017	2020	2023
Capacity – GW*	16.0	10.8	8.8

**DECC EEP reference case (2014) – Unabated coal capacity based on a scenario of average carbon intensity of electricity generation of 100g CO₂/kWh in 2030*

The position of individual plants is a matter for plant operators.

David T. C. Davies:

[2434]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what information her Department holds on UK coal plants that intend to cease operations before June 2016.

Andrea Leadsom:

Scottish & Southern Energy (SSE) has announced that it will close its Ferrybridge coal-fired power station by 31 March 2016.

Ms Margaret Ritchie:

[3265]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, if she will publish a plan committing to phase-out coal without carbon capture technology from the power sector by 2032.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Government's planning policy prevents the building of new coal power plants without carbon capture and storage and this is backed up by the Emissions Performance Standard which sets a limit on the carbon dioxide emissions from new fossil fuel plants.

Current policies are leading to the progressive decline in unabated coal generation. Coal accounted for 40% of total UK generation in 2012 falling to 29% in 2014. The Department's analysis shows that unabated coal is expected to account for around 1% of total UK generation by 2025.

■ Coal Fired Power Stations: Pollution Control

David T. C. Davies:

[2754]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what representations she has received from coal-fired power stations on the EU Industrial Emissions Directive.

Andrea Leadsom:

My rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State has regular meetings with Cabinet colleagues on a variety of topics.

Details of meetings between Ministers and external organisations are published quarterly on the Departmental website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ministers-meeting-with-external-organisations>.

David T. C. Davies:

[2755]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what forecast her Department has made of which UK coal-fired power stations will be in compliance with the EU Industrial Emissions Directive when it comes into force.

Andrea Leadsom:

One UK coal-fired power station, EON's Ratcliffe-on-Soar, is expected to have the capability to meet the emissions levels set by the Industrial Emissions Directive when it comes into force on 1st January 2016.

All UK coal fired power stations have elected to be part of the UK's Transitional National Plan. This gives them until end June 2020 to make the upgrades needed to meet the emissions levels required under the Directive.

Electricity Generation**David T. C. Davies:**[\[2432\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what steps her Department has taken to provide replacement electricity generating capacity following the closure of coal-fired power stations at Ferrybridge and Longannet; and if she will make a statement.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Capacity Market is designed to ensure sufficient capacity is available to meet demand. The first auction held last year contracted a total of 47.3GW of capacity delivery year 2018/19 and a further auction for delivery year 2019/20 will be held later this year.

In the shorter term the Government has worked with National Grid and Ofgem to put in place an effective plan which allows National Grid to procure New Balancing Services. This worked well last winter. This plan has been robustly stress-tested to cope with the toughest system conditions, and is flexible enough to adapt to individual plant closures such as Ferrybridge and Longannet.

David T. C. Davies:[\[2433\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what the planned capital investment requirements are for the new generating capacity required to replace closing electricity plants; and what estimate she has made of the cost per Mwh of electricity generated by such plants in comparison with current electricity market prices.

Andrea Leadsom:

Large capital investment is planned for the GB electricity sector not only in the context of ageing plants, but upgrading network infrastructure, meeting decarbonisation objectives and maintaining security of supply. Between 2010 and 2013, we estimate over £45 billion private sector investment in electricity generation and networks. We have estimated further capital investment requirements to be up to £100bn between 2014 and 2020. We have not estimated the proportion of this investment that relates directly to replacing ageing plants.

For DECC's most recent published estimates of the costs per MWh for a range of generation technologies, please refer to the levelised cost estimates published in the Electricity Generation Costs (December 2013) report which can be found at the link below.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/269888/131217 Electricity Generation costs report December 2013 Final.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/269888/131217_Electricity_Generation_costs_report_December_2013_Final.pdf).

David T. C. Davies:

[2446]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, which power plants are expected to be decommissioned or closed in the next five years; what the expected year of closure for each such plant is; and what the individual generating capacity for each such plant expressed as a proportion of the total maximum UK demand for electricity is.

Andrea Leadsom:

Decisions on the closure of individual power stations are a matter for their owners and are likely to take account of a wide range of factors, including the age of the plant and its condition; cost of maintenance; cost of necessary upgrades (for example to comply with environmental legislation), the plant's profitability and competitive position in the market; and the extent to which the owner needs the capacity to meet contractual commitments.

The Department models the operation of the electricity market including the construction and decommissioning of plants as part of the analytical basis for supporting its policy decisions. This is published as the Digest of UK Energy Statistics (DUKES) and Energy and Emissions Projections (EEP) available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/digest-of-uk-energy-statistics-dukes> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/energy-and-emissions-projections> respectively.

This modelling includes aggregated figures for total generation capacity by technology type for future years but does not provide information about specific plants.

David T. C. Davies:

[2753]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what steps her Department has taken to assist energy-intensive industries in preparing contingency plans for requests to reduce their demand for electricity at times of system stress; and if she will make a statement.

Andrea Leadsom:

Energy-intensive industries already participate in National Grid's balancing services reducing their consumption at times of high demand. These contracts are on a voluntary, bilateral, and commercial basis.

Government has committed to two years of 'Transitional Arrangements' before the full Capacity Market begins, aimed to support new demand side providers including these industries, to grow and prepare prior to the first year ahead auction in 2017.

■ Electricity: Prices

David T. C. Davies:

[2750]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what forecast her Department has made of (a) wholesale and (b) retail electricity prices in (i) 2020, (ii) 2025 and (iii) 2030 as an absolute value in pounds sterling.

Andrea Leadsom:

In September 2014 DECC published a set of updated energy and emission projections.

[1] Annex M of that publication presents the Department's projections of wholesale and retail prices for a range of users under varying assumptions of fossil fuel prices and economic growth.

Based on that publication, Table 1 below presents the wholesale electricity price projections for low, central and high fossil fuel scenarios. Table 2 below presents retail electricity price projections for households under low, central and high fossil fuel scenarios.

Projections for other users (industrial and service sectors) can also be found in Annex M at the link provided. Updated projections will be published in the autumn.

TABLE 1: WHOLESALE ELECTRICITY PRICE PROJECTIONS UNDER VARYING FOSSIL FUEL PRICE SCENARIOS. £/MWH, (REAL 2014 PRICES)

Fossil fuel price scenario.	2020	2025	2030
Low	£43	£49	£51
Central	£55	£69	£73
High	£74	£85	£93

TABLE 2: RETAIL ELECTRICITY PRICE PROJECTIONS FOR HOUSEHOLDS UNDER VARYING FOSSIL FUEL PRICE SCENARIOS. £/MWH, (REAL 2014 PRICES)

Fossil fuel price scenario.	2020	2025	2030
Low	£184	£201	£206
Central	£193	£213	£217
High	£218	£229	£234

[1] DECC (2014) 'Updated energy and emission projections 2014': Available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/updated-energy-and-emissions-projections-2014>

Paul Flynn:

[3037]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, pursuant to the contribution of the Minister of State for Energy and Climate Change of 17 June 2015, Official Report, columns 108-112 WH, what the evidential basis is for the statement that the price of wholesale electricity will rise into the 2020s.

Andrea Leadsom:

DECC's projections of electricity prices are produced using a detailed model of the electricity market¹. Key drivers of the price include fossil fuel prices and carbon prices (including accounting for carbon allowances and the carbon price floor). More details of the Department's methodology for projecting fossil fuel prices, carbon prices and the carbon price floor can be found at the following:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/360598/DECC_2014_fossil_fuel_price_projections.pdf

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/360277/Updated_short-term_traded_carbon_values_used_for_UK_policy_appraisal_2014.pdf

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/81274/consult_carbon_price_support_ia.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/carbon-price-floor-reform>.

[1]<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dynamic-dispatch-model-ddm>

Energy: Prices

David T. C. Davies:

[2751]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what assessment she has made of the effect of the carbon price floor and the expected reduction in capacity of coal-fired power plants on future household fuel costs.

Andrea Leadsom:

The impact of the Carbon Price Floor on consumer bills has been assessed in the following report, *"Estimated impacts of energy and climate change policies on energy prices and bills, DECC, 2014"*:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/384404/Prices_Bills_report_2014.pdf

The report includes figures for projected average electricity bills in 2014, 2020 and 2030. The cost of anticipated new generation capacity is reflected in these figures.

Frank Field:

[3200]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, if she will bring forward proposals for a regulated social tariff for all energy suppliers to ensure all low income customers automatically receive the cheapest tariff.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Competition and Markets Authority are currently undertaking a review of competition in the energy market and are due to publish Provisional Findings and Possible Remedies (if required) shortly. The CMA has the necessary expertise to determine what problems exist in the energy market and identify appropriate solutions. This Government has committed to implement all relevant recommendations of the CMA.

■ Environment Protection: Taxation

David T. C. Davies: [2424]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what discussions she has had with HM Treasury concerning the effect of the carbon price floor on UK energy security; and if she will make a statement.

David T. C. Davies: [2436]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, when she last met with the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills to discuss the carbon price floor and its effect on energy intensive industry.

David T. C. Davies: [2437]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, when she last met with representatives of the (a) coal industry and (b) coal fired electricity generating sector to discuss the effects of the carbon price floor on those sectors.

David T. C. Davies: [2438]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, when she last met with the Secretary of State for Wales to discuss the impact of the carbon price floor on Welsh energy security.

David T. C. Davies: [2439]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, when she last met with the Secretary of State for Scotland to discuss the effect of the carbon price floor on Scottish energy security.

Andrea Leadsom:

My rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State has regular meetings with Cabinet colleagues on a variety of topics.

Details of meetings between Ministers and external organisations are published quarterly on the Departmental website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ministers-meeting-with-external-organisations>.

David T. C. Davies: [2442]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what assessment she has made of potential savings for her Department's spending in capacity payments if the carbon floor price was removed.

Andrea Leadsom:

My rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State has not made an estimate of the impact of removing the Carbon Price Floor (CPF) on capacity payments. Removing the CPF would result in a change in the relative economics of coal and gas generation and so may affect the level at which individual plant bid under the Capacity Market. It is not clear whether the net effect of this would result in a reduction in the overall cost of the

Capacity Market as the level of capacity payments depends on which plant sets the clearing price.

■ Gas Fired Power Stations

David T. C. Davies: [2431]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, with reference to the Departmental Gas Generation Strategy published in 2012, which gas-fired power plants with planning consent are under construction in the UK.

Andrea Leadsom:

An 880 MW Combined Cycle Gas Turbine (CCGT) is currently under construction at Carrington, Greater Manchester.

David T. C. Davies: [2445]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what the length of time taken was to re-establish commercial levels of electricity supply from a mothballed gas fired plant to the National Grid.

Andrea Leadsom:

A report by independent energy consultants Parsons Brinckerhoff commissioned by the Department considers the timescales to mothball and return gas plant to service:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/technical-assessment-of-the-operation-of-coal-gas-fired-plants>.

The report indicates a restoration period between 2 and 90 days dependent on a number of factors including the type of plant, the period for which it has been mothballed and whether a major overall is required before a plant is returned to service.

■ Green Deal Scheme

Alex Cunningham: [2964]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, how many loans have been made in each region under the Green Deal since it was introduced.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Department reported on 18th June 2015, the number of 'live' Green Deal Plans (i.e. Plans with measures installed) by Region, up to 31st March 2015, in Table 1.7 of the following National Statistics release:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/green-deal-energy-company-obligation-eco-and-insulation-levels-in-great-britain-quarterly-report-to-march-2015>.

Alex Cunningham: [2965]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what the value of loans is made under the Green Deal in each region since that scheme was introduced.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Department reported there were 6,809 unique households that had taken out 'live' Green Deal Plans at the end of March 2015, (i.e. Plans with measures installed) as reported in Table 1.7 of the following National Statistics release:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/green-deal-energy-company-obligation-eco-and-insulation-levels-in-great-britain-quarterly-report-to-march-2015>

The initial Green Deal finance loan values associated with these Plans at the end of March 2015 was estimated in the order of around £26.5m (excluding APR payments, i.e. the original loan amount). A breakdown by region is shown in the table below:

Table A: The number of 'live' Green Deal Plans and initial loan amounts by Region, up to 31st March 2015

	<i>NUMBER OF LIVE PLANS</i>	<i>INITIAL LOAN AMOUNT (£)*</i>
Great Britain	6,809	26,460,000
England	3,362	11,390,000
North East	692	2,460,000
North West	718	2,510,000
Yorkshire and The Humber	606	1,760,000
East Midlands	428	1,510,000
West Midlands	250	800,000
East	188	650,000
London	71	170,000
South East	108	240,000
South West	301	1,300,000
Wales	328	1,300,000
Scotland	3,119	13,780,000

**Rounded to nearest ten thousand.*

■ Hinkley Point C Power Station

Paul Flynn: [\[2768\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what estimate she has made of the unit cost of electricity from the planned Hinkley Point C nuclear power plant.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Government and EDF agreed a Strike Price of £89.50/MWh (in 2012 prices) fully indexed to the Consumer Price Index in October 2013. The price benefits from upfront reduction of £3/MWh built in on assumption that EDF will be able to share first of a kind costs of EPR reactors across Hinkley Point C and Sizewell C sites. If the final investment decision is not taken on Sizewell C, the Strike Price for Hinkley Point C will be £92.50/MWh.

The UK Government and EDF are working together to finalise the documentation for the Hinkley Point C project.

Paul Flynn: [\[2771\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what estimate she has made of the cost of decommissioning and long-term radioactive waste management at the planned Hinkley Point C nuclear power plant.

Andrea Leadsom:

The estimated decommissioning and long-term radioactive waste management costs for the Hinkley Point C nuclear power plant have been provided by NNB Generation Ltd and reviewed by the Department.

Based on these estimates, we anticipate that the costs will account for around £2 per megawatt hour of the strike price for this power station.

■ Nuclear Power

Paul Flynn: [\[3039\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, pursuant to the contribution of the Minister of State for Energy and Climate Change of 17 June 2015, Official Report, columns 108-112WH, what the evidential basis is for official the statement that nuclear power is a low-carbon, proven technology.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology, which is Parliament's in-house source of independent, balanced and accessible analysis of public policy issues related to science and technology, has produced a briefing note setting out lifecycle carbon emissions of electricity generating technologies. This briefing note states that from a series of peer-reviewed studies, most estimates of nuclear lifecycle emissions internationally are below 26 grams of carbon dioxide equivalent per kilowatt-hour of electricity generated. Some studies referenced in the note place these values much lower even than 26gCO₂eq/kWh, with cited UK nuclear generation estimated to be between 5.5 and 7gCO₂eq/kWh. These figures are comparable to those for offshore wind generation, stated to be between 5.2 and 13gCO₂eq/kWh. Nuclear generation has been

a proven, reliable source of electricity generation in the UK and worldwide for decades. The full note on lifecycle carbon emissions is available online at the following address:

http://www.parliament.uk/documents/post/postpn_383-carbon-footprint-electricity-generation.pdf.

■ Nuclear Power Stations

David T. C. Davies:

[2443]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what the (a) fuel type and (b) individual generating capacity expressed as a proportion of the total maximum UK demand for electricity is for each (i) operating and (ii) mothballed UK-based nuclear generating unit.

Andrea Leadsom:

The fuel type for UK nuclear electricity generation is Uranium.

Total simultaneous maximum load (total peak demand) met in 2013 was 51,811 MW in Great Britain – (Northern Ireland is excluded because their network is attached to the Irish Grid). [1]

Table 1 shows the current operating plants alongside their percentage of the total peak GB demand mentioned above. We do not have any mothballed UK-based nuclear generation.

Table 1 – Operating plants installed capacities (Sum total may not add up due to rounding)

OPERATING PLANTS	TYPE	INSTALLED CAPACITY/ MW ^A	% OF TOTAL PEAK GB DEMAND
Wylfa 1	Magnox	490	1%
Dungeness B 1&2	AGR	1040	2%
Hartlepool 1&2	AGR	1180	2%
Heysham I-1 & I-2	AGR	1155	2%
Heysham II-1 & II-2	AGR	1220	2%
Hinkley Point B 1&2	AGR	945	2%
Hunterston B 1&2	AGR	960	2%
Torness 1&2	AGR	1185	2%
Sizewell B	PWR	1198	2%
Total: 16 units		9373	18%

OPERATING PLANTS	TYPE	INSTALLED CAPACITY/ MW ^A	% OF TOTAL PEAK GB DEMAND
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(Table 5.10, pg. 144 -152)

[1]https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/337649/chapter_5.pdf

Paul Flynn:

[2769]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what discussions she has had with (a) the Office of Nuclear Regeneration, (b) EDF Energy and (c) the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority on the current status of the Design Basis Threat for each UK nuclear installation.

Andrea Leadsom:

In line with recommendations set out by the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Department shares national Design Basis Threat information covering the civil nuclear sector with the Office for Nuclear Regulation, and nuclear site licence companies, which include EDF and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority.

Paul Flynn:

[2770]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what recent assessment she has made of the adequacy of radiation protection regulations at nuclear power plants in the UK.

Andrea Leadsom:

Robust regulations are in place to ensure the radiological protection of nuclear workers and the public. These are enforced by the Office of Nuclear Regulation and by the Environment Agency in England and its counterparts in the Devolved Administrations. The regulations are based on scientific advice from Public Health England which is kept under review. The regulations also conform to principles and standards developed by the International Atomic Energy Agency and the International Commission for Radiological Protection as well as EU legislation on radiation safety.

Implementation is monitored and evaluated continuously through regulatory oversight at nuclear plants, to ensure the radiological safety of nuclear workers, and through environmental monitoring to ensure public safety. The UK environmental and food standards agencies jointly publish environmental monitoring results in the annual Radiation In Food and the Environment report. Their most recent report (covering the year 2013) confirmed previous findings that the levels of radioactivity of nuclear origin are well within agreed limits.

■ Nuclear Power Stations: Bradwell-on-sea

Harry Harpham: [\[2307\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, whether she plans to give the Bradwell nuclear site to (a) the Chinese State Nuclear Corporation or (b) another Chinese state-owned company in order to build a Chinese-manufactured reactor.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Bradwell new build site identified in the National Policy Statement Nuclear as one of 8 sites potentially suitable for deployment of a new nuclear reactor by 2025 and is owned by EDF.

The development of the site is a commercial matter for EDF.

■ Ofgem

Steve McCabe: [\[2688\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, if she will bring forward legislative proposals to strengthen Ofgem's powers to enforce their rules regarding vulnerable customers.

Andrea Leadsom:

Ofgem has a number of tools to protect consumers, including enforcement powers against a breach in licence conditions such as, SLC 26 (services for specific domestic customers), SLC 27 (payments, security deposits and disconnections) SLC 28 (prepayment meters), and has prioritised its work to protect consumers in vulnerable situations. It has published a Consumer Vulnerability Strategy which sets out its approach to identifying and tackling consumer vulnerability in the energy market. Ofgem is due to publish a report on progress against the strategy later this summer.

■ Opencast Mining

Stephen Kinnock: [\[2980\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what plans she has to tackle risks associated with disused open cast mines; and if she will make a statement.

Andrea Leadsom:

These are obviously important issues for both the Welsh Assembly and Scottish Governments, and the local authorities who are affected.

In neither case is there a legal responsibility on the UK Government to meet the costs of restoring surface mine sites.

Notwithstanding, I am aware that HM Treasury colleagues are considering proposals put forward for tax exemption related funding in relation to Scotland to address the remediation of former surface mine sites of now insolvent companies. The issues in Wales, although they also relate to remediation, are different in that the relevant site owners are still in existence.

■ Solar Power: Bridgend

Mrs Madeleine Moon: [\[2851\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, whether Government funding or subsidy has been offered or promised to Suncredit UK Ltd to develop a solar park at Court Colman, Bridgend; and if she will make a statement.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Government mechanisms for incentivising deployment of renewable electricity are generation-based. This means that support is granted on the basis of each megawatt-hour of electricity actually generated by stations which qualify for accreditation under a scheme or which secure a contract for difference (CfD) to provide support. No scheme offers financial support for the development of generating stations.

■ Wind Power: Investment

Dr Alan Whitehead: [\[2306\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what estimate her Department has made of the amount invested in onshore wind projects planned to begin before 31 March 2017 which have not yet received Renewables Obligation Certificates.

Andrea Leadsom:

Onshore wind has made a valuable contribution to the UK energy mix in recent years and we are confident that it will make its expected contribution to the UK's carbon reduction and renewables targets. We will consider carefully the level of investment that developers are likely to bring forward under the proposals announced by my rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State on 18 June.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Agriculture: Subsidies

Calum Kerr: [\[3148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether her Department plans to carry out the review of the convergence of uplift payment allocation in 2016.

Calum Kerr: [\[3149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what research her Department plans to undertake to establish a fair and objective criteria for an assessment of land classes across the UK in advance of her Department's review of convergence of uplift payment allocation.

George Eustice:

The Government has committed to undertaking a review in 2016/17 of intra-UK CAP budget allocations. This review will include a comparison of land types across the UK.

■ Deer Act 1991

Mark Durkan: [\[3261\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many people were (a) proceeded against and (b) convicted of an offence under the Deer Act 1991 in 2014.

Mark Durkan: [\[3262\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many people were (a) proceeded against and (b) convicted of an offence under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 in 2014.

Mark Durkan: [\[3271\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many people were (a) proceeded against and (b) convicted of an offence under the Wild Animals (Protection) Act 1996 in each police force area in 2014.

Rory Stewart:

The Government is committed to tackling crimes against wildlife. The UK National Wildlife Crime Unit, which is part-funded by Defra, monitors and gathers intelligence on illegal activities, including those relating to badger persecution and poaching, which are UK wildlife crime priorities. The Unit also provides assistance to police forces when required.

The number of persons proceeded against at magistrates' courts and found guilty at all courts for offences under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, in England and Wales, in 2014, can be viewed in table 1.

The number of persons proceeded against at magistrates' courts and found guilty at all courts for offences under the Deer Act 1991, in England and Wales, in 2014, can be viewed in table 2.

No proceedings were brought to court for offences under the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996 in 2014.

TABLE 1

NUMBER OF PERSONS PROCEEDED AGAINST AT MAGISTRATES' COURTS AND FOUND GUILTY AT ALL COURTS FOR OFFENCES UNDER THE PROTECTION OF BADGERS ACT 1992 ⁽¹⁾, ENGLAND AND WALES, 2014 ⁽²⁾⁽³⁾

	Proceeded against	Found guilty
England and Wales	25	18

(1) Includes all Sections under Protection of Badgers Act 1992

(2) The figures given in the table relate to persons for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences it is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the

TABLE 1

NUMBER OF PERSONS PROCEEDED AGAINST AT MAGISTRATES' COURTS AND FOUND GUILTY AT ALL COURTS FOR OFFENCES UNDER THE PROTECTION OF BADGERS ACT 1992 ⁽¹⁾, ENGLAND AND WALES, 2014 ⁽²⁾⁽³⁾

statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

(3) Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that these data have been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by the courts and police forces. As a consequence, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

Source: Justice Statistics Analytical Services - Ministry of Justice.

TABLE 2

NUMBER OF PERSONS PROCEEDED AGAINST AT MAGISTRATES' COURTS AND FOUND GUILTY AT ALL COURTS FOR OFFENCES UNDER THE DEER ACT 1991(1), ENGLAND AND WALES, 2014(2) (3)

	Proceeded against	Found guilty
England and Wales	2	-

(1) Includes all Sections under Deer Act 1991

(2) The figures given in the table relate to persons for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences it is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

(3) Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that these data have been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by the courts and police forces. As a consequence, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

Source: Justice Statistics Analytical Services - Ministry of Justice.

■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Pay

Stewart McDonald:

[\[3146\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what timetable she has set for her Department to become a living wage employer.

George Eustice:

Defra is already a Living Wage employer in relation to our permanent members of staff who are paid above the Living Wage. I am working with my officials to examine ways to

encourage our contractors to pay the Living Wage to their staff as soon as practically possible.

■ Environmental Stewardship Scheme

Grahame Morris: [\[2456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the effect in terms of loss of amenities on surrounding properties where an Environmental Stewardship Scheme is in operation.

George Eustice:

Land management activities undertaken as part of an Environmental Stewardship agreement are confined to the land under agreement. No such assessment has been made, and Defra is not aware of any such reports of loss of amenity on any surrounding properties where an Environmental Stewardship agreement is in operation.

■ Floods: Coastal Areas

Barry Gardiner: [\[2599\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, by what date she plans to publish reports into the social and economic effect of an East Coast storm surge.

Barry Gardiner: [\[2600\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, by what date she plans to publish the report into the effect of an East Coast storm surge on food supply.

George Eustice:

The project referred to is a food related project concerning the resilience of the food supply chain.

The report of the Defra project The Resilience of the Food Supply to Port Flooding on the East Coast (FO0454) has been completed and peer reviewed and is currently being finalised for publication in accordance with our procedures.

■ Hunting Act 2004

Mark Durkan: [\[3270\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many people were (a) proceeded against and (b) convicted of an offence under the Hunting Act 2004 in each police force area in 2014.

Rory Stewart:

2014 figures for the number of persons proceeded against at magistrates' courts and found guilty at all courts for offences under the Hunting Act 2004 are set out, by police force area in England and Wales, in table 1.

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF PERSONS PROCEEDED AGAINST AT MAGISTRATES' COURTS AND FOUND GUILTY AT ALL COURTS FOR OFFENCES UNDER THE HUNTING ACT 2004 ⁽¹⁾, BY POLICE FORCE AREA, ENGLAND AND WALES, 2014 ⁽²⁾⁽³⁾

Police force area	Proceeded against	Found guilty
Avon and Somerset	5	-
Bedfordshire	-	-
Cambridgeshire	3	-
Cheshire	-	-
Cleveland	2	-
Cumbria	2	-
Derbyshire	-	-
Durham	3	3
Essex	-	-
Gloucestershire	-	-
Hampshire	-	-
Hertfordshire	-	-
Humberside	17	13
Kent	3	3
Lancashire	5	5
Leicestershire	1	-
Lincolnshire	4	2
Merseyside	-	-
Metropolitan Police	-	-
Norfolk	4	-
Northumbria	3	3
North Yorkshire	-	-
Nottinghamshire	-	-

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF PERSONS PROCEEDED AGAINST AT MAGISTRATES' COURTS AND FOUND GUILTY AT ALL COURTS FOR OFFENCES UNDER THE HUNTING ACT 2004 ⁽¹⁾, BY POLICE FORCE AREA, ENGLAND AND WALES, 2014 ⁽²⁾⁽³⁾

South Yorkshire	-	-
Staffordshire	-	-
Suffolk	7	4
Surrey	-	-
Sussex	-	-
Thames Valley	2	2
West Mercia	3	-
West Yorkshire	-	-
Wiltshire	-	-
England and Wales	64	35

(1) Includes Section 1,3(1)(2), 5(1)(a)(b)(c)(d), 5 (2)(a)(b)(c) and 6 of Hunting Act 2004.

(2) The figures given in the table relate to persons for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences it is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

(3) Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that these data have been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by the courts and police forces. As a consequence, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

Source: Justice Statistics Analytical Services - Ministry of Justice.

Ref: PQ3270

■ Salmon

Jim Shannon:

[\[2707\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate she has made of the number of salmon caught in UK rivers in each of the last five years.

George Eustice:

The numbers of salmon reported to have been caught by anglers in UK rivers in each of the last five years is shown in the table below. These figures do not include salmon caught by nets and traps which are situated in estuaries or coastal areas of the UK. The majority of the fish caught (67 to 80%) were released. The data for 2014 is provisional.

YEAR	NO. CAUGHT	NO. RELEASED	NO. RETAINED	% RELEASED
2010	140,498	94,162	46,336	67
2011	116,714	80,556	36,158	69
2012	110,876	78,157	32,719	70
2013	86,808	67,179	19,629	77
2014	61,489	49,140	12,349	80

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ British Indian Ocean Territory: Marine Protected Areas

Patrick Grady:

[\[2407\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to comply with the award of the Arbitral Tribunal in the case of Chagos Marine Protected Area Arbitration (Mauritius v. UK) dated 18 March 2015.

James Duddridge:

The Arbitral Tribunal agreed with us that it had no jurisdiction to consider sovereignty, and found that there was no improper motive in the creation of the Marine Protected Area (MPA) around the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT). In respect of the Tribunal's findings about the process of establishing the MPA, it noted that it is now open to the UK and Mauritius to enter into negotiations to take account of Mauritian interests in the marine environment of the Territory.

The Government wishes to implement the award in the spirit of greatest possible cooperation, and has written to the Mauritian government several times since the award, making a proposal to hold consultations about the protection of the marine environment as early as July.

■ British Indian Ocean Territory: Military Bases

Mr Douglas Carswell: [\[2380\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what plans his Department has to revise the terms of the 1966 Exchange of Notes concerning the Availability for Defence Purposes of the British Indian Ocean Territory.

James Duddridge:

The British Indian Ocean Territory remains a vital strategic asset for the UK and the US, and a key contributor to our broader bilateral defence relationship. We have consistently said that we want to see the US presence there continue. No decision has yet been made about whether to seek to revise the terms of the Exchange of Notes, but we will have in mind this continuing, shared strategic interest.

■ British Indian Ocean Territory: Resettlement

Patrick Grady: [\[2385\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when the Government plans to make an announcement on allowing Chagossian resettlement on the Chagos Islands.

James Duddridge:

Following consideration of this issue in the last Parliament, officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Department for International Development and the Ministry of Defence are working jointly to clarify the areas requiring further analysis announced in my Written Ministerial Statement of 24 March 2015 (HCWS461). To aid this further analysis, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has also sought information from the Home Office, Department for Work and Pensions and the US Government on relevant issues and on essential practical requirements associated with options to resettle a Chagossian population as well as continuing discussions with other interested parties including Parliamentarians and Chagossian representatives. This work is ongoing, and we will explain our conclusions to interested parties in due course.

Patrick Grady: [\[2386\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with (a) the Department for International Development and (b) other relevant bodies to facilitate Chagossian resettlement on the Chagos Islands in 2015.

James Duddridge:

Following consideration of this issue in the last Parliament, officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Department for International Development and the Ministry of Defence are working jointly to clarify the areas requiring further analysis announced in my Written Ministerial Statement of 24 March 2015 (HCWS461).

To aid this further analysis, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has also sought information from the Home Office, Department for Work and Pensions and the US Government on relevant issues and on essential practical requirements associated with options to resettle a Chagossian population as well as continuing discussions with other

interested parties including Parliamentarians and Chagossian representatives. This work is ongoing, and we will explain our conclusions to interested parties in due course.

■ **British Overseas Territories: Governing Bodies**

Andrew Gwynne:

[2520]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether his Department pays the cost of ceremonial uniforms of overseas territories governors; and what the cost of such items was in the last financial year.

James Duddridge:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not pay the cost of ceremonial uniforms for overseas territories governors. Falkland Islands, Gibraltar and Bermuda are the only overseas territories who have retained the ceremonial uniform and uniform costs are funded by the individual territory governments.

■ **Burundi: Politics and Government**

Fiona Bruce:

[2377]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department has taken to (a) address the security and political situation in Burundi and (b) support the emergence of conditions conducive to the organisation of inclusive and peaceful elections in that country.

James Duddridge:

In the last month, I have met, phoned and written to the Burundian Foreign Minister, telling him that I am deeply concerned about the situation in Burundi, and that I expected the Burundian government to end the violence, to act in accordance with the principles of the Arusha Agreement and to take concrete steps towards establishing conditions for free, fair and peaceful elections. I have reiterated these points in public statements of 14 and 26 May.

During my attendance at the African Union Summit on 11-12 June, I spoke to the Kenyan, Rwandan, and Ugandan Foreign Ministers, as well as the Chairperson of the African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC), on the need for the region to put pressure onto the Burundian government to deliver stability and credible, inclusive elections. British Government High Commissioners, Ambassadors, and senior officials have been repeating these messages throughout the East Africa region. I fully support the actions proposed by the African Union PSC as detailed in its 13 June communiqué <http://www.peaceau.org/uploads/psc-515-comm-burundi-13-6-2015.pdf>. FCO officials and I are working with the region and international partners in an effort to persuade the Burundian government to work within this framework.

■ Embassies: Marriage

Tom Brake: [\[2522\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many same-sex couples have married in UK Consulates under the Consular Marriage and Marriages under Foreign Law Order 2014 in each country.

James Duddridge:

Our Consulates have performed 154 same sex marriages in nine countries since the Consular Marriage and Marriages under Foreign Law Order 2014 came into effect on 10 June 2014. The number of marriages performed in each country is as follows: Australia 120; Cambodia 3; China 10; Colombia 2; Dominican Republic 1; Japan 7; Philippines 5; Seychelles 1; Vietnam 5.

■ Gaza

Mr Andrew Smith: [\[2694\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for (a) UK and (b) EU policy of the recent report by the World Bank to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee which concluded that Gaza is on the verge of collapse.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

While the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has not made an assessment of the recent report by the World Bank to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, the UK and the EU are extremely concerned about the situation in Gaza. We continue to urge the parties to prioritise progress towards a durable solution for Gaza. To assist with Gaza's reconstruction, the UK pledged £20m to help kick start the recovery and help get the Gazan people back on their feet at the Gaza reconstruction conference on in October 2014. We have already disbursed 75% of our pledge. This is in addition to our earlier provision of £19.1 million in UK aid in response to last summer's crisis. We call on all donors to fulfil their financial pledges to aid the reconstruction efforts in Gaza without delay.

■ Government Departments: Wines

Andrew Gwynne: [\[2785\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what value of wine from the Government's wine cellar was consumed by each government Department in (a) each quarter of 2014-15 and (b) 2015-16 to date.

James Duddridge:

Details of usage of the Government wine cellar for financial year 14/15 will be released in the Annual Statement on the Government Wine Cellar, to be placed before the House in July. Access to the cellar stock is only available as part of the overall service offered by Government Hospitality to departments. There is no breakdown of wine usage by department.

■ Hamas: Weapons

Dr Poulter:

[2571]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what reports he has received on the test-firing of rockets into the Mediterranean sea by Hamas.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We have received reports that Hamas has recently stepped up its military activities, including firing a number of rockets into the Mediterranean sea. Other militant groups in Gaza have also recently fired rockets into Israel. We strongly condemn the firing of any rockets by militant groups in Gaza.

■ Iran: Nuclear Power

Mr David Burrowes:

[3058]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the proposed permanent nuclear deal between Iran and the P5+1 would permit the IAEA to conduct anytime, anywhere inspections of Iran's nuclear facilities.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

A comprehensive nuclear deal with Iran must include robust monitoring of Iran's nuclear activities, and Iran's implementation of its Additional Protocol which provides for International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) access to nuclear facilities. Full implementation of the Additional Protocol under a comprehensive agreement is vital in order to reassure the international community that Iran's nuclear programme is exclusively peaceful. comprehensive nuclear deal with Iran must include robust monitoring of Iran's nuclear activities, and Iran's implementation of its Additional Protocol which provides for International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) access to nuclear facilities. Full implementation of the Additional Protocol under a comprehensive agreement is vital in order to reassure the international community that Iran's nuclear programme is exclusively peaceful.

Mr David Burrowes:

[3059]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the IAEA has been granted access to the Arak facility in Iran.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has monthly access to the reactor at Arak. The IAEA Director General's 29 May Iran report confirms that the Agency carried out an inspection at Arak on 11 May 2015 and observed that no new major components had been installed. Iran continues to abide by its commitments under the Joint Plan of Action.

■ Israel: Ethnic Groups

Mr Andrew Smith: [\[2618\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to the Israeli government on attempts to transfer Bedouin families from the South Hebron Hills to near Jericho.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

On 28 May, we raised our serious concerns about the potential forcible transfer of the Bedouin in E1 and other parts of Area C and the Israeli Supreme Court's ruling approving the demolition of the West Bank village Susiya with senior officials from the Israeli National Security Council. On 8 June, envoys from all 28 European Union Member States including the British Consul General to Jerusalem visited the Bedouin community at Susiya. The delegation's visit was to emphasise their continuing support for the community and their opposition to demolitions in general.

■ Maldives

Kerry McCarthy: [\[2509\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent report he has received on the current political situation in the Maldives.

Mr Hugo Swire:

The Government receives regular reports on the political situation in the Maldives including from our High Commissioner in Colombo. Our High Commissioner there is also accredited to the Maldives, and travelled to Malé last month to meet President Yameen, opposition parties, non-government organisations and the media.

The opposition coalition organised a mass rally last Friday in the capital city malé. I called Foreign Minister Dunya on 11 June to press for an even handed government response. We understand that the protests remained largely peaceful and were conducted in accordance with police instructions. Nevertheless, twelve men including Mr Ahmed Mahloof MP were arrested.

We have expressed our concerns about the rushed trial of former President Nasheed, which appeared to contravene the Maldives' own laws and practices, as well as international fair trials standards. Nasheed sought for clemency from the President on 15 June. The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention is currently investigating his case. We are also concerned at the arrests, trials and convictions of other opposition figures and that these also fail to meet local and international standards.

■ Middle East: Armed Conflict

Dr Poulter: [\[2572\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent reports he has received on the construction of cross-border tunnels along the Israel-Gaza border by Hamas.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We have assessed that Hamas are seeking to rebuild infrastructure, including the tunnel network, in Gaza. An official from our Embassy in Tel Aviv held a meeting with representatives from the Israeli National Security Council on 28 May, where the issue of the construction of cross-border tunnels was discussed.

■ Nigeria: Christianity**Jim Shannon:**[\[2708\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with the new Prime Minister of Nigeria on the situation of the Christian minority in the north of that country.

James Duddridge:

In their conversations with President Buhari, both the Prime Minister, my right hon. Friend the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron) and The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond) have underlined our concern about the threat Boko Haram poses to communities of different faiths and ethnicities in Nigeria. Boko Haram's attacks are often indiscriminate and they commit appalling atrocities against all those, both Christian and Muslim, who do not follow their extremist and intolerant views. We condemn their actions unreservedly. As the Prime Minister, my right hon. Friend the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron) informed colleagues on 10 June, we have equally underlined to the President our commitment to helping him tackle the threat. The UK is providing a substantial and increasing package of intelligence, military and development support, including programmes working with religious leaders to directly address conflict in northern Nigeria and training and advice to Nigerian units deploying against Boko Haram.

■ Rohingya**Imran Hussain:**[\[3153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to encourage Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia to (a) protect the human rights of Rohingya refugees and (b) provide those refugees with asylum.

Mr Hugo Swire:

In response to the humanitarian crisis at sea in South East Asia, I instructed our network of Embassies and High Commissions to lobby regional governments, including Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia, urging them to uphold the international obligation of rescue at sea. We also tasked them to work together to tackle the smuggling and trafficking rings and address the underlying causes of irregular migration of people by sea, specifically raising the plight of the Rohingya. We welcomed the 20 May decision of the governments of Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia to provide humanitarian aid to those at sea, and the decision by Thailand to hold a regional coordination meeting on 28 May, which we attended as an observer. We also welcome the decision by the Association of South East Asian Nations to look into this issue further.

It is not for the UK to determine the asylum policy of other countries, but we encourage all States that have not done so to sign and ratify the 1951 Refugee Convention, and to adhere to its obligations.

■ Western Sahara: Referendums

Andrew Gwynne: [\[2829\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he is taking to encourage a free and fair referendum on the governance of Western Sahara.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK is fully supporting UN-led efforts to encourage Morocco and the Polisario Front to agree a lasting and mutually-acceptable political solution that provides for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara. I discussed the issue of Western Sahara with the Government of Morocco during my visit on 20 May.

HEALTH

■ Abortion

Fiona Bruce: [\[2373\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the potential risk to health of undergoing repeat abortions; and if he will take steps to reduce the number of repeat abortions.

Jane Ellison:

Clinical guidance from the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists sets out the risks associated with abortions and repeat abortions. The guidance highlights that women should be informed that abortion is a safe procedure for which major complications and mortality are rare at all gestations if delivered to the standards set out in the guidance.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence recommends that increased uptake of long acting reversible contraception should reduce unintended pregnancy rates and prevent significant numbers of repeat abortions. Any woman having an abortion by a provider commissioned by the National Health Service should be given advice about contraception before they leave the clinic.

■ Agriculture: Antibiotics

Kerry McCarthy: [\[3078\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with ministerial colleagues in the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs about bringing forward targets for reducing the inappropriate use of antibiotics in agriculture in line with comparable targets for reducing their use in medicine in the UK Five Year Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy 2013-18; and what assessment he has made of the potential effect on human health of not so adjusting those targets.

Jane Ellison:

The UK Five Year Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy 2013-18 was developed with close collaboration between the Department of Health, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Veterinary Medicines Directorate. The collaboration continues during the implementation phase of the Strategy. This includes senior representation from these departments on the High Level Steering Group, which oversees the implementation.

The High Level Steering Group endorsed the publication in December 2014 of the annual progress report and implementation plan of the UK five year antimicrobial resistance strategy, which set out targets for reducing antimicrobial use in livestock production in real terms over the next four years.

It is recognised that the link between antibiotic use in animals and the development of antibiotic resistance in humans is complex. The Government continues to carry out research and surveillance to better understand the potential impacts of one on the other.

■ Back Pain: Northern Ireland

Jim Shannon: [\[2669\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with Ministers in the Northern Ireland Executive on spinal cord treatment for back pain.

Jane Ellison:

No discussions have taken place between the Ministers of the Department and the Ministers in the Northern Ireland Executive about spinal cord treatment for back pain.

■ Diabetes

Luciana Berger: [\[3154\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 15 June 2015 to Question 1756, if he will include in the action plan for diabetes a national patient experience survey for patients with diabetes.

Luciana Berger: [\[3155\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 15 June 2015 to Question 1756, what consultation his Department plans to undertake on the action plan for diabetes.

Jane Ellison:

Preventing diabetes and promoting the best possible care for people with diabetes is a key priority for this Government. We are working with NHS England and Public Health England and will put forward our plans in due course.

The Patient Experience of Diabetes Services (PEDS) pilot, a module of the National Diabetes Audit, was conducted in 2014. NHS England will review the PEDS survey alongside other proposals at its next review meeting in October 2015.

■ Emergency Health Cards: European Economic Area

Margaret Ferrier: [3068]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he has taken to raise awareness among people travelling within European Economic Area countries in order to ensure all such travellers hold an EHIC card.

Alistair Burt:

The Department has taken a series of ongoing steps to raise awareness among travellers in the European Economic Area (EEA) about the importance of carrying with them both a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) and a valid travel insurance policy to cover private medical care or other additional costs.

The Department works closely with the Foreign Office to ensure key messages get onto social media platforms targeting customers in the United Kingdom looking to travel.

In conjunction with the Foreign Office, campaigns have also been carried out within Europe to target holiday makers already abroad, especially Spain where approximately 12 million British nationals visit each year.

Videos to raise awareness on the EHIC have been created by the Department and the European Commission and distributed on websites such as the Post Office, gov.uk and YouTube.

In addition, we have and will again encourage students coming from EEA countries for the new academic year to bring their EHIC with them, and use it when accessing NHS health care.

There is also extensive information on the NHS Choices website about the EHIC scheme.

■ Everolimus: Finance

Dan Jarvis: [3075]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans he has to provide funding for everolimus.

George Freeman:

It is for National Health Service commissioners to make funding decisions on individual treatments taking into account guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) where available. Cancer drugs that are not routinely funded by the NHS may be available through the Cancer Drugs Fund.

Everolimus is available through the Cancer Drugs Fund for two indications: (i) in combination with exemestane, for advanced HER2-negative hormone-receptor-positive breast cancer after endocrine therapy and (ii) for the second-line treatment of advanced renal cell carcinoma.

Everolimus is currently being appraised by NICE for the prevention of organ rejection in liver transplantation and for use in renal transplantation.

Everolimus is also licensed for use in the treatment of Tuberous Sclerosis and Subependymal Giant Cell Astrocytoma (SEGA). NICE has not been asked to develop guidance on the use of everolimus for these conditions. It is therefore for NHS commissioners to take funding decisions based on an assessment of the available evidence.

In January this year, NHS England launched a three-month public consultation to seek people's views about proposals for a set of principles which NHS England should apply when making investment decisions and a new process for developing commissioning policies for specific treatments, drugs and medical devices. These elements are part of a Framework, which, when finalised, will underpin every decision NHS England makes about specialised services investments.

Now that the consultation has ended, NHS England has advised that work is underway to determine whether any amendments are required to its proposals as a result of the feedback received.

■ General Practitioners

Jim Shannon:

[2668]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to ensure that there are adequate numbers of GPs; and if he will discourage the movement of UK-trained GPs overseas.

Ben Gummer:

Health Education England (HEE); NHS England; the Royal College of General Practitioners (GPs) and the British Medical Association GP Committee are working closely together to ensure that we have a skilled, trained and motivated workforce in general practice.

As at September 2014, there were 36,920 full-time equivalent GPs working and training in the National Health Service. This is an increase of 1,677 since September 2010.

HEE will ensure a minimum of 3,250 trainees per year (equating to approximately half of the annual number of trainees completing foundation training and moving into specialisations) are recruited to GP training programmes in England by 2016.

In January, a £10 million investment was announced to kick start a new plan to expand the general practice workforce. The money will be used to recruit new GPs, retain those that are thinking of leaving the profession and encourage doctors to return to general practice to better meet the needs of patients now and for the future.

HEE identified a need for a national Induction and Refresher Scheme which was launched in March 2015 and is administered through the GP National Recruitment Office. Candidates now have a standardised entry point to help speed up the time it takes to process individuals through the scheme and also making it easier for candidates to access relevant information.

■ Health: Cost Effectiveness

Emma Reynolds: [\[2678\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the HM Treasury's press release, Chancellor announces £4.5 billion of measures to bring down debt, published 4 June 2015, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on the £200 million savings in public health budgets in 2015-16.

Jane Ellison:

Department of Health officials have been in discussion with officials in the Department for Communities and Local Government. We will shortly publish a consultation on how best to implement these savings in ways that minimise any disruption to services.

■ Hearing Impairment: Medical Treatments

Jim Shannon: [\[2667\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to consider the use of new drugs and treatments for hearing loss and tinnitus.

Alistair Burt:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is responsible for developing technology appraisal guidance for the National Health Service on whether new and existing treatments represent an effective use of NHS resources. NHS commissioners are required to fund drugs and treatments recommended by NICE, normally within three months of the publication of final guidance.

The Department is aware of a number of treatments for specific types of hearing loss, as well tinnitus, which are currently in development. The safety and efficacy of these treatments would need to be sufficiently demonstrated in clinical trials before they could become publically available and appropriate for consideration by NICE.

■ In Vitro Fertilisation: Hereditary Diseases

Jim Shannon: [\[2712\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department takes to ensure that genetic disorders are not passed on to babies through IVF treatment.

Jane Ellison:

The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990, as amended, and the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority's code of practice provide a number of safeguards to ensure that, as far as possible, genetic disorders are not passed on to babies through IVF treatment.

■ Mental Health Services

Luciana Berger:

[3197]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans he has for the future implementation of the No Health without Mental Health strategy.

Alistair Burt:

NHS England, in its latest planning guidance, *Forward View into action: planning for 2015-16*, has set the expectation that clinical commissioning groups' (CCG) spending on mental health services in 2015/16 should increase in real terms, and grow by at least as much as each CCG's allocation increase to support the ambition of parity between mental and physical health. At both a national and regional level, work is being done to robustly assure this and ensure there is clear validity for commissioner justification of proposed spend.

'*Achieving Better Access to Mental Health Services by 2020*', published in October 2014, enabled the setting of access and waiting time standards in mental health services for the very first time. These were introduced in 2015/16 and included:

- treatment within six weeks for 75% of people referred to the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme, with 95% of people being treated within 18 weeks;
- treatment within two weeks for more than 50% of people experiencing a first episode of psychosis; and
- £30 million targeted investment will help people in crisis to access effective support in accident and emergency. Availability of liaison psychiatry will inform Care Quality Commission inspection and therefore contribute to ratings.

The Department and NHS England are working together with mental health system partners to develop detailed proposals for the introduction of further access and waiting time standards from 2016 onwards.

Following the publication of the national Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat in February 2014, every area has now signed up to the Concordat and detailed action plans are now in place across the country setting out how local partners will work together to adopt these principles and improve crisis care. Many plans include the enhancement of existing services and the development of new services involving a range of partners, including local third sector organisations.

Our current commitment to the national anti-stigma Time to Change programme relates to a standalone year of activity in 2015-16. This is for a core programme with a budget of £4.6 million in 2015-16, with the Department contributing £2.5 million, the Big Lottery Fund contributing £1.1 million and Comic Relief £1 million.

The first annual report on *Preventing suicide in England: A cross-government outcomes strategy to save lives* was published in January 2014 and highlighted a new agreement designed to promote greater sharing of information with friends and family of people at

risk of suicide. In January 2015, an ambition for 'zero suicides' was announced to raise the aspiration for mental health and suicide prevention.

On 18 May 2015, the Prime Minister reaffirmed his commitment that children's mental health and improving access and reducing waiting times for children remains a key priority for this Government.

The 2015 Budget announced increased funding for children's mental health by £1.25 billion over the next five years (£250 million per year), starting in April 2015.

The principal task of the Mental Health Taskforce, formed in March 2015, is to develop a new five-year all-ages national strategy for mental health. In order to develop the strategy, the Taskforce is exploring the variation in access to and quality of mental health services across England; looking at outcomes for people who are and are not able to access services and consider ways to tackle the prevention of mental health problems.

■ Mental Health Services: Finance

William Wragg: [\[2459\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how the Government plans to ensure that clinical commissioning groups spend appropriate and proportionate amounts on mental health.

William Wragg: [\[2460\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to ensure that clinical commissioning groups take practical steps to give equal value to physical and mental health care.

William Wragg: [\[2462\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what progress the Government is making on ensuring that parity of esteem between mental and physical health services is fully delivered.

William Wragg: [\[2463\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will take steps to rebalance the NHS budget to ensure mental health care receives the level of investment needed.

Alistair Burt:

NHS England is giving greater priority and greater scrutiny to the mental health agenda. In its latest planning guidance, *Forward View into action: planning for 2015-16*, was the expectation that clinical commissioning groups' (CCG) spending on mental health services in 2015/16 should increase in real terms, and grow by at least as much as each CCG's allocation increase to support the ambition of parity between mental and physical health.

At both a national and regional level, work is being done to robustly assure this and ensure there is clear validity for commissioner justification of proposed spend.

NHS England's Five Year Forward View set out a clear commitment to driving towards a more equal response across mental and physical health and achieving genuine parity of esteem by 2020.

A key element of achieving parity across mental and physical health care is in people having timely access to evidence-based and effective treatment.

In October 2014, NHS England and the Department jointly published "Improving access to mental health services by 2020". This set out a clear vision to ensure mental and physical health services are given equal priority through:

- targeted investment to help people in crisis to get effective support; and
- the introduction of national waiting time standards to provide better access to mental health services over the next five years, subject to future resourcing decisions following the next Spending Review.

The first set of standards set the expectation that, from 1 April 2016:

- 50% of people experiencing a first episode of psychosis are treated with a NICE-approved package of care within two weeks of referral;
- 75% of adults referred to the national programme for talking therapies will be treated within six weeks, and 95% within 18 weeks; and
- £30 million investment targeted to support effective models of liaison psychiatry in a greater number of acute hospitals.

This is supported by an £80 million funding package for 2015/16 from NHS England's budgets.

In addition, announcements in the autumn statement and spring budget have allocated additional funding to support transformative work to improve access to child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) and perinatal mental health services. Part of this funding will be allocated to developing waiting times standards for CAMHS, initially for community based eating disorder services.

A Mental Health Task Force has been constituted to produce a costed five-year plan for the National Health Service to support improvement of mental health services, which is anticipated to report during summer 2015.

NHS England is committed to delivering parity of esteem between mental health and physical health, and recognises that spending is one of the areas which must be addressed. Good progress is already being made:

- Based on CCG and NHS England plans, there was a real terms increase in spending on mental health in 2014/15 compared to 2013/14;
- NHS England required CCGs to increase their spending on mental health by at least as much as the growth in their programme allocations; and
- In 2015/16, there are a range of new investments in mental health services, including:

- o £250 million a year to improve services for expectant and new mothers, children and young people;
- o £80 million a year from NHS England's budgets to improve early intervention in psychosis, liaison psychiatry and Talking Therapies services for common mental health conditions, and to deliver new access and waiting time standards; and
- o £30 million a year to improve community services for children and people with eating disorders.

■ Mental Health Services: Young People

William Wragg:

[2461]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps the Government is taking to improve support for children and young people with mental health issues.

Alistair Burt:

This Government is committed to improving children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. The Department is working with NHS England and other partners to enhance significantly the support offered to children and young people.

We are already making progress in a number of areas including:

- The extension and expansion of the children and young people's Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme.
- Joint training and piloting of staff in schools and local mental health services to strengthen the mental health support and advice available in schools.

The Department is also commissioning the first prevalence survey of child and adolescent mental health in over 10 years. The survey will provide an accurate assessment of how many children and young people are living with mental health issues. Publication is anticipated in 2017.

In addition, NHS England is leading work to develop new access and waiting time standards for eating disorder services.

■ Mental Health: Health Education

Mr Nigel Evans:

[3272]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what initiatives his Department has created in order to destigmatize mental health issues.

Alistair Burt:

The Time to Change initiative is an ambitious national programme being delivered by leading mental health charities Mind and Rethink Mental Illness to reduce stigma and discrimination towards people with mental health problems. The Department strongly supports this initiative and it, the Big Lottery Fund and Comic Relief all provided funding for the programme. The Department funded the campaign with over £16 million between 2011/12 and 2014/15 and is to continue funding the organisation until March 2016 with up to £2.5 million. This extension in funding will enable Time to Change to

continue to work with people with experience of mental health problems to challenge attitudes and discrimination; run social marketing campaigns and work with local and regional partners on community-led activity.

Since 2011, more than two million people (4.8% of the population) have improved their attitudes towards people who have a mental illness. In the most recent attitudes survey, conducted at the end of 2013, the biggest improvement in public attitudes in a decade was achieved, with a 2.8% improvement between the 2012 and 2013 surveys.

■ NHS: Crimes of Violence

Dr Poulter:

[2558]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many assaults there were on NHS staff in (a) Central Suffolk and North Ipswich constituency, (b) the NHS East Anglia area and (c) the UK in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) 2014-15.

George Freeman:

The information is not held centrally in the format requested and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

NHS Protect collates figures annually on reported physical assaults on National Health Service staff in England.

Information on the number of reported physical assaults against NHS staff in 2013-14 is in the attached document and is also available at:

<http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/3645.aspx>

The tables cover 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014 which is the latest period for which information is available. Figures for 2014-15 are currently being collected and are yet to be released.

Attachments:

1. Reported physical assaults on NHS staff 2013-14 [Reported_Physical_Assaults_2013-14.pdf]

■ NHS: Public Consultation

Luciana Berger:

[3196]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when his Department plans to publish its response to the consultation on updating the NHS constitution that closed in April 2015; and what plans his Department has to publish responses received by that consultation.

Ben Gummer:

Following the consultation on the NHS Constitution that closed in April 2015, the Department intends to publish the Government response to the consultation in the week commencing 29 June. Within the Government response, we will outline the changes proposed to the NHS Constitution, the amendments made as a result of the public consultation, and the rationale behind these changes.

The response will be published alongside the Report on the Effect of the NHS Constitution, a report that measures public and staff awareness and use of the NHS Constitution. Both will be made available to the public at the NHS Constitution page on gov.uk.

The Department plans to publish the results of the consultation, including a full breakdown of responses by question, in late July. The consultation results will be publically available on gov.uk, sitting alongside the Government response.

■ Pharmacy: Finance

Oliver Dowden: [\[2508\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he has taken to provide financial assistance to pharmacies that qualified for payments under the Essential Small Pharmacies Local Pharmaceutical Services Scheme; and if he will make a statement.

Alistair Burt:

NHS England has been working with all essential small pharmacy local pharmaceutical services contractors. 82 of those on the scheme as at 31 March 2015 have returned to the pharmaceutical list, of which 48 contractors are in discussion with regional teams about proposals for continuing to provide pharmaceutical services under a local contract. 20 contractors are now providing services under such a contract. No community pharmacy has closed as a result of the ending of the scheme.

■ Social Services

Neil Coyle: [\[2452\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to page 11 of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services annual budget survey, published on 4 June 2015, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policy of the findings that seven per cent of directors who responded to that survey are fully confident that planned savings can be met in 2016-17 and that a smaller proportion of directors is so confident in respect of 2017-18.

Alistair Burt:

Funding decisions for 2016/17 onwards, including on adult social care, are subject to the forthcoming Spending Review.

The Department will continue to work closely with local government and the National Health Service to understand future funding requirements, including continuing scope and opportunities to make savings, to support decisions relating to the upcoming Spending Review.

■ Social Services: Appeals

Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck: [\[3194\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, for what reasons proposed plans for a new appeals system in adult social care do not include making recommendations of independent appeals panels binding on local authorities.

Alistair Burt:

In February 2015, the Department published a consultation on policy proposals for a new appeals system for care and support. It will publish a response in due course.

The proposals set out a non-judicial appeals system to encourage early resolution and an inquisitorial rather than adversarial approach. This is intended to provide a relatively low cost solution as compared with formal legal redress.

Under the policy proposals consulted on, an Independent Reviewer would review the local authority's original decision and make a recommendation. The local authority would then make its decision considering the Independent Reviewer's recommendation. This will provide a check and balance to the system and ensure a recommendation is made by an impartial third party, which the local authority must consider in its final recommendation.

■ Social Services: Finance**Neil Coyle:**[\[2453\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services annual budget survey, published on 4 June 2015, if he will make an assessment of the potential cost to the NHS of planned savings in the budgets held by those directors not being met.

George Freeman:

The Department will continue to work closely with local government and the National Health Service to understand future funding requirements, including continuing scope and opportunities to make savings, to support decisions relating to the upcoming Spending Review.

■ Social Services: Qualifications**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:**[\[3195\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what progress he has made on the implementation of the new Care Certificate; and what recent estimate he has made of the number of health and care workers who are making progress towards obtaining that certificate.

Ben Gummer:

The new Care Certificate was introduced on 1 April 2015. It comprises 15 standards developed jointly by Health Education England, Skills for Care and Skills for Health and which were extensively tested through a pilot exercise running from April to September 2014. New healthcare assistants and social care support workers starting on or after 1 April will be expected to demonstrate that they meet the standards and attain the Care Certificate. The Care Certificate is not mandatory, although health and care providers must be able to demonstrate that they meet an equivalent standard of training and induction for their new healthcare assistants and social care support workers.

The Department does not collect data on the number of care staff who have attained the Care Certificate or who are currently undertaking it.

■ Terminal Illnesses

Fiona Bruce: [\[2602\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the findings of the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman's report, *Dying without dignity*, published on 20 May 2015, what steps NHS England is taking to ensure (a) dying patients receive information on that prognosis in a sensitive manner and (b) communication between health professionals on the terminal prognosis of a patient is conducted in a timely manner.

Fiona Bruce: [\[2603\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if his Department will take steps to ensure that all terminally ill patients have an agreed individual care plan which includes nutritional values, symptom control and psychological, social and spiritual support.

Fiona Bruce: [\[2604\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the findings of the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman's report, *Dying Without Dignity*, published on 20 May 2015, what steps he is taking to ensure sedative drugs are administered appropriately to terminally ill patients.

Fiona Bruce: [\[2605\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the findings of the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman's report, *Dying Without Dignity*, published on 20 May 2015, if he will make it his policy to ensure that all health professionals involved in the care of terminally ill patients undergo specialist training to ensure such patients and their families are communicated with in a sensitive, appropriate and timely manner; and if he will make a statement.

Ben Gummer:

The cases highlighted in the Ombudsman's report are deeply troubling. Everyone deserves good quality care, delivered with compassion, at the end of their lives.

In June 2014, the Leadership Alliance for the Care of Dying People, which included NHS England and the Department, published *One Chance to Get it Right*. This set out five priorities for the care of a dying person, the key principles that should underpin the care that all people at the end of life receive which the Ombudsman's report endorsed as the right approach to achieving high quality, compassionate care for all dying people.

The priorities for care and the accompanying guidance for staff, care providers and commissioners, cover issues such as recognising dying, sensitive and timely communication, symptom control (including sedation), physical, psychological, social and spiritual support, care planning, nutrition and hydration and staff education and training. They also provide for a personalised approach aimed at delivering care in ways that meet individual needs and preferences.

Following *One Chance to Get it Right*, NHS England, the Care Quality Commission and other system partners have worked together to implement the priorities for care and taken forward specific actions to improve the way care is delivered and commissioned.

Subsequently, in October 2014, NHS England set out in “Actions for End of Life Care 2014-16”, what it would do to improve end of life care.

NHS England is also working with key stakeholders on new ambitions for end of life care and this group now includes a representative from the Ombudsman. This will ensure that the lessons learned from the Ombudsman’s report are fed in to the National Health Service’s plans to improve end of life care.

■ Transvaginal Mesh Implants: Surgery

Jim Shannon: [\[2711\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will take steps to promote the availability of sacrohysteropexy as an alternative to hysterectomy in the NHS.

George Freeman:

In January 2009, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) published an interventional procedure guidance (IPG282) on the insertion of mesh uterine suspension sling (including sacrohysteropexy) for uterine prolapse repair.

The guidance found that the evidence on the safety and efficacy of the procedure was inadequate in quantity and recommends it should only be used with special arrangements for clinical governance, consent and audit or research.

Where uterine prolapse repair is needed, surgeons and patients should discuss the range of options, including sacrohysteropexy where it is clinically appropriate, in line with the NICE guidance.

HOME OFFICE

■ Deportation

Greg Mulholland: [\[2013\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her policy is on the deportation of people to countries which use the death penalty.

James Brokenshire:

Where legally permissible we will deport foreign nationals to countries with the death penalty, provided the individual will not face the death penalty when they return.

■ Deportation: Pakistan

Chris Stephens: [\[2562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what reports she has received on the status of Majid Ali since his deportation to Pakistan.

Chris Stephens: [\[2563\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assurances her Department received from the government of Pakistan on the protection of the basic rights, wellbeing and safety of Majid Ali upon his deportation to that country.

Chris Stephens: [\[2564\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department took to ensure the protection of the rights and safety of Majid Ali upon his deportation to that country.

James Brokenshire:

We do not comment publicly on specific cases.

■ Immigration Controls

Paul Blomfield: [\[2888\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 17 December 2014 to Question 218487, on immigration controls, when she plans to publish the results of the policy review referred to in that Answer.

James Brokenshire:

[Holding answer 22 June 2015]: New family Immigration Rules were implemented on 9 July 2012 to prevent burdens on the taxpayer, promote integration and tackle abuse. We have continued to keep them under review and to make adjustments in light of feedback on their operation and impact. We have also taken into account the findings of the courts, including the Court of Appeal judgment upholding the lawfulness of the minimum income threshold for sponsoring family migrants under the new rules. This ongoing review process will continue.

■ Marriage Certificates

Gloria De Piero: [\[2920\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to publish plans for changes to marriage certificates to allow the names of both parents to be recorded.

James Brokenshire:

[Holding answer 22 June 2015]: To achieve this important update to marriage certificates it is likely that there will need to be changes to administrative processes, IT systems and legislation. When we have completed assessment of the options and their affordability we will bring forward proposals to introduce the necessary changes.

■ Mediterranean Sea: Refugees

Stephen Gethins: [\[2319\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to support migrants and asylum seekers who (a) are children, (b) are elderly, (c) have serious injuries and (d) have other specialist needs who are rescued during operations in the Mediterranean.

Stephen Gethins: [\[2321\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent discussions her Department has had with its EU counterparts on search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean.

James Brokenshire:

Initial medical triaging and assistance is carried out on board UK vessels deployed to the Mediterranean for search and rescue purposes. Migrants are then taken to a nearby port, as directed by the Italian authorities, where their needs can be more fully assessed and addressed by Italian authorities there.

The UK has regular discussions with other Member States about search and rescue in the Mediterranean.

Furthermore, the UK is also playing a leading role in pushing for comprehensive, long-term action through the EU and the UN to tackle the cause of illegal immigration and the organised trafficking gangs behind it, as well as increasing support and protection for those who need it North and East Africa. We are clear that the need to break the link between getting on a boat and achieving residence in Europe.

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[2495\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent representations she has received from European officials concerning the migrant situation in the Mediterranean.

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[2496\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what further resources the Government plans to offer to the international effort to save the lives of migrants attempting to cross the Mediterranean.

James Brokenshire:

[Holding answer 18 June 2015]: The UK has regular discussions with European officials about the migrant situation in the Mediterranean. The Government remains committed to working with other Member States to find a sustainable solution.

It is vital that the EU breaks the link between getting on a boat and achieving residence in Europe, and breaks the business model of the people smugglers and traffickers. We are playing a leading role in joint efforts to achieve this but comprehensive, long-term action in countries of origin and transit is also required to tackle the causes of illegal immigration. We are determined to focus joint EU and international efforts on building stability in these countries, and increase support and protection for those who need it in North and East Africa.

The Government has already pledged substantial resource to the effort to save lives in the Mediterranean, including HMS Bulwark, two Border Force cutters and three Merlin Helicopters. We are keeping this under close review.

■ Passports

Jim Shannon:

[\[2672\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will ensure that compensation payments are granted to people affected by passport processing delays in 2014.

James Brokenshire:

Her Majesty's Passport Office and its predecessor bodies have never guaranteed that standard passport applications will be delivered within certain turnaround times. A passport will never be issued until the necessary security and other checks have been satisfactorily completed. The turnaround times are intended as guidance only, as is made clear.

■ Police Custody: Mental Illness**Kate Osamor:**[\[3034\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department collects information on the age, ethnicity and gender of people with mental illnesses detained in police custody.

Mike Penning:

The Home Office does not collect this information centrally. The Home Office collates information recorded by police forces on the age, ethnicity and gender of people arrested on suspicion of a criminal offence, but not specifically in relation to mental ill health. Last October the Home Secretary announced plans to work with forces to pilot the collection of data on people detained under section 135 and 136 of the Mental Health Act. This will capture the age, ethnicity, and gender of people detained, as well as the place of safety used, including the use of police cells. The initiative is voluntary in 2015/16 with a view to it becoming a mandatory part of the Home Office's Annual Data Requirement for all forces in England and Wales from 2016/17. National figures will be based on aggregated data and it will not be possible to provide a detailed breakdown of the age, ethnicity or gender of those people taken to police custody as opposed to another place of safety.

■ Police: Pensions**Mr David Anderson:**[\[3086\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent representations she has received on disparities between the level of pensions paid to the widows of police officers in Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK; and if she will make a statement.

Mike Penning:

The Home Secretary received representations under the last Government setting out a compelling case on behalf of widows and widowers of police officers about their pension entitlement. In the Budget on 18 March, the Chancellor announced that widows, widowers and surviving civil partners of police officers who have died on duty in England and Wales will no longer lose their survivors' benefits in future if they remarry, form a civil partnership or cohabit. The Home Office will consult the Police Advisory Board for England and Wales (PABEW) shortly on proposals to implement this change. As policing is a devolved matter in Northern Ireland and Scotland, the Northern Ireland Executive and Scottish Government respectively are responsible for the design and funding of police pensions in those parts of the United Kingdom.

■ Radicalism

Jim Shannon: [\[2671\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to address the rise in far-right organisations in the UK.

Karen Bradley:

The Government takes very seriously the need to respond to the threat from all types of extremism. Our new counter-extremism strategy will create a new partnership to protect people from extremism in all its forms: non-violent and violent, neo-Nazi and Islamist. The strategy will also introduce a comprehensive range of additional measures including additional legislation to tackle extremist individuals, groups and to close premises used for extremist activity.

■ Refugees: Detainees

Frank Field: [\[2832\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the Government's policy is on the detention of refugee women.

James Brokenshire:

The Home Office will not routinely use immigration powers to detain individuals who have been granted refugee status, though may need to do so in specific circumstances, for example if the refugee has subsequently been convicted of committing a crime and deportation action is being taken against them. We would not seek to deport a refugee in such circumstances if they still faced a real risk of death, persecution or torture.

■ Theft: Dogs

Jim Shannon: [\[2706\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many thefts of dogs occurred in the UK in each of the last five years.

Mike Penning:

The Home Office holds statistics on notifiable offences recorded by the police. The police record offences of thefts, in a number of categories and supply this information to the Home Office. Theft of dogs is most likely to be recorded within 'other theft', however theft of dogs cannot be separately identified within this category.

■ Vetting

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[3256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 11 June 2015 to Question 1466, what additional resources her Department plans to make available to ensure that all Disclosure and Barring Service checks are completed on time nationally in the next 12 months.

Karen Bradley:

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) operates on a full cost-recovery basis and is expected to make neither a surplus nor a loss. The DBS provides funding to local police forces to process disclosure applications that require local police intelligence checks. In the small proportion of cases where checks are not completed within normal performance standards, the DBS is taking steps to improve performance, working with the police and other parties.

■ **Visas****Mr David Winnick:**[\[2953\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her Department's practice is in cases in which hon. Members send further documentary evidence to UK Visas and Immigration on visitor's applications which have been refused after meeting constituents who are visa sponsors; whether that body considers that evidence as part of the original application; whether it is her Department's policy to give advice in all such cases that a new application should be made; and if she will make a statement.

James Brokenshire:

[Holding answer 22 June 2015]: An application to visit the UK can be reconsidered where representations are made that assert and provide evidence showing that the refusal contained a material error. Where representations contain new evidence that was not submitted with the original application, applicants should submit such evidence through a fresh application, which will then be considered on its own merit against the requirement of the Immigration Rules.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT■ **Developing Countries: Hearing Impairment****Kate Green:**[\[2774\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what estimate she has made of the proportion of UK aid that supports projects for deaf people.

Kate Green:[\[2775\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, which projects funded by UK aid support deaf people; and in which countries those projects are based.

Grant Shapps:

DFID funds a number of projects which support deaf people, including through Sense International and the Disability Rights Fund, which supports Deaf People's Organisations in a number of countries including Rwanda and Uganda. DFID advocates for the use of the Washington Group Questions as a method of disaggregating data by disability. The questions can give policy makers a better understanding of the number and situation of deaf people as well as those with other impairments. DFID is implementing its disability

framework, published in December 2014. The framework sets out how DFID will make its policies and programmes more inclusive of all people with disabilities.

■ **International Labour Organisation: Finance**

Mary Creagh: [\[3052\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 10 June 2015 to Question 1293, what funding her Department has provided to International Labour Organisation programmes in each of the last six years.

Mary Creagh: [\[3056\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 10 June 2015 to Question 1293, in what countries her Department is working on projects with the International Labour Organisation; and what the value of her Department's funding is for each such project.

Justine Greening:

Over the last six years my Department has provided £7.6 million to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) for specific programmes where this represents value for money. DFID is currently funding programmes delivered by the ILO in India, Bangladesh and Nepal.

■ **Israel: Third Sector**

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[2940\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what her policy is on providing funding to non-governmental organisations and charities that promote boycotts or sanctions against Israel.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

DFID's work in the Occupied Palestinian Territories is channelled through trusted partners including both the UN and non-governmental organisations and mainly consists of large-scale and strategic programmes. The UK Government has made its position on boycotts clear. While we do not hesitate to express disagreement with Israel whenever we feel it necessary, we are firmly opposed to boycotts. We believe that imposing sanctions on Israel or supporting anti-Israeli boycotts would not support our efforts to progress the peace process and achieve a negotiated solution.

■ **Palestinians: Humanitarian Aid**

Mr Andrew Smith: [\[2617\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what arrangements are in place to prevent companies involved in violations of international humanitarian law in the occupied Palestinian territories from benefitting from contracts funded by her Department for humanitarian relief in Gaza.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

The UK does not directly fund contracts for humanitarian relief. The UK was one of the biggest donors to the crisis last summer, providing more than £17 million in immediate humanitarian assistance for those caught up in the conflict and pledging a further £20 million in early recovery assistance, of which we have disbursed over 80%. This funding includes £0.5 million to the Materials Monitoring Unit (MMU) which oversees and monitors the import, storage, supply and use of construction materials into Gaza under the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism (GRM).

■ Western Sahara: Ethnic Groups**Andrew Gwynne:**[\[2831\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps she is taking to assist the Sahrawi people.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

The UK provides protection and support to refugees, including the Sahrawi people, through its core contributions to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). UNHCR provides humanitarian assistance for 90,000 vulnerable Sahrawi refugees settled in five camps near Tindouf in Algeria. UNHCR provides security for both the refugees and the humanitarian organizations operating in the camps. The UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) is responsible for monitoring the ceasefire as well as supporting a range of assistance programmes to address the plight of displaced and separated Sahrawi families. The Mission was recently extended to April 2016.

JUSTICE**■ Administration of Justice****Carolyn Harris:**[\[900503\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he plans to take to ensure access to justice regardless of ability to pay.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

The Government's reform programme is intended to deliver a simpler justice system that is more accessible to the public. Changes in scope for Legal Aid protect funding for those who really need legal advice.

Our reforms also aim to support people in resolving their disputes by means of more informal and less costly remedies than going to court.

■ Bill of Rights**Mr Alan Mak:**[\[900504\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what progress he has made on his plans for a British Bill of Rights; and if he will make a statement.

Dominic Raab:

The Government was elected with a mandate to reform and modernise the UK human rights framework. The UK has a proud tradition of respect for human rights which long pre-dates the 1998 Human Rights Act. But the 1998 Act opened the system to abuse, which has damaged the credibility of human rights.

We will bring forward proposals for a British Bill of Rights, which will replace the Human Rights Act. Our Bill will protect fundamental human rights, but also prevent their abuse and restore common sense to the system.

The Queen's Speech included a clear commitment to bring forward proposals for a Bill of Rights in this parliamentary session. We will then legislate after full consultation.

Courts: ICT**Sir Oliver Heald:**[\[3249\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what progress he has made on plans for paperless working in the courts.

Mike Penning:

Improving the use of digital technology is key to modernising our justice system in England and Wales. We are reforming the Criminal Justice System to reduce reliance on paper both in the administration of our courts, and in the courtroom.

Our HMCTS Reform Programme will build on this foundation and ensure that the justice system makes better use of technology to provide easier access to a more responsive and swifter system.

Employment Tribunals Service: Fees and Charges**Anne McLaughlin:**[\[900502\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will review the level of employment tribunal fees.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

On 11 June we announced the start of the post-implementation review of the introduction of fees in the Employment Tribunal. The review will consider how successful the policy has been in achieving its original objectives, which included maintaining access to justice for those seeking to bring disputes to the Tribunal. Our intention is to complete the review later this year.

National Probation Service for England and Wales: Sick Leave**John Healey:**[\[2536\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many days' absence due to sickness of staff working for the National Probation Service there were in each month since May 2010.

Andrew Selous:

Prior to 1 June 2014, Probation services in England and Wales were delivered through 35 Probation Trusts. Sickness absence information for the Trusts was published in the

Management Information Addendum to the NOMS Annual Report and Accounts in each year until 2013/14. Information on sickness absence, on a monthly basis is contained in the table below.

Annualised Average Working Days Lost in Probation Trusts - May 2010 to March 2014

PROBATION SERVICE

SICKNESS ABSENCE

AVERAGE WORKING DAYS LOST

MAY 2010 - MARCH 2014

	Month	Financial Year		
		FY 2010/11	FY 2011/12	FY 2012/13
		FY 2013/14		
April	-	7.6	9.2	9.5
May	8.1	8.3	10.4	9.0
June	8.5	9.2	8.6	8.2
July	8.7	9.0	10.2	9.6
August	8.7	9.0	10.2	8.8
September	9.9	9.7	9.7	9.6
October	10.5	10.0	12.1	11.0
November	10.9	11.1	11.6	10.5
December	12.0	9.9	9.7	10.4
January	10.2	10.4	11.7	11.3
February	9.2	10.4	9.9	9.9
March	9.6	10.5	9.5	10.0

Sickness absence is highly seasonal and therefore comparisons from month to month within a year are not helpful. Comparisons from the same month in successive years are the only reliable indicator of changes in absence levels.

All 35 Probation Trusts ceased to provide probation services from 1 June 2014 as a result of the change to the structure of probation. On that date both the National Probation Service and the Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) were formed. Sickness

absence information was published for the new organisations for the first time on 17 November 2014, in the management information release, "Management Information for Probation, 1 June – 30 September England & Wales". This publication covered sickness absence data for the period from June to September 2014. The information published at that time is contained in the table below.

National Probation Service staff

Sickness Absence

Average Working Days Lost

June - September 2014

	JUN-14	JUL-14	AUG-14	SEP-14
NPS	9.0	10.9	10.9	11.7

Note: Sickness absence information is subject to final cleaning at the end of the financial year so the information presented in the Management Information Addendum to the NOMS Annual Report and Accounts will differ from the information as it was published in November 2014.

The information in the table above relates to the four months immediately following the transition to the new probation structure. We take the health and wellbeing of probation staff extremely seriously and we recognise that the transition was a challenging time for them. Support arrangements were in place from the outset and staff continue to be supported.

Sickness absence for the whole of 2014/15 will be published on 30 July 2015 in the Management Information Addendum to the NOMS Annual Report and Accounts. This will address the as yet unpublished final period of probation trusts for April and May 2014, and for the NPS from October 2014 to March 2015.

■ Prisoners: Rehabilitation

Heather Wheeler:

[\[900507\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he plans to take to increase the effectiveness of rehabilitation of female prisoners.

Caroline Dineneage:

Maintaining family links, education and promoting aspiration are essential to helping female offenders turn their lives around. The women's custodial estate has been reconfigured so that women offenders can be held as close as possible to their homes, with access to the right interventions and opportunities for meaningful resettlement.

In addition, Community Rehabilitation Companies are providing embedded resettlement services, which are required to be tailored to the specific needs of women.

SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE ON THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION■ **Electoral Register**

John Mann: [3246]

To ask the hon. Member for South West Devon, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, what proportion of electors in each local authority area are data matched.

Mr Gary Streeter:

The data matching of electors as part of the transition to Individual Electoral Registration took place in summer 2014 in England and Wales and following the referendum on independence in Scotland. In addition to sending the information to Honourable Members, the Commission published the number and percentage of electors matched within local authority areas on its website.

http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/_data/assets/excel_doc/0007/177964/CLR-Data-LA-results-WEBSITE.xlsx

http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/_data/assets/excel_doc/0020/179030/CLR-Scotland-LA-Data-WEBSITE.xlsx

The Commission has more recently reported on how many of the entries on the May 2015 electoral registers do not relate to individually registered electors – those who were not data matched and have also not subsequently made an individual application to register. This data was also sent to Honourable Members and was published on the Commission's website.

http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/_data/assets/excel_doc/0007/190465/IER-May-2015-electoral-registers-data.xlsx

■ **Newcastle City Council: Constituencies**

Mr Nicholas Brown: [2527]

To ask the hon. Member for South West Devon, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, what criteria were applied by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England when deciding to commence a review of the local authority ward boundaries for the City of Newcastle upon Tyne.

Mr Gary Streeter:

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) decided to commence an electoral review of Newcastle upon Tyne City Council after it identified significant levels of electoral inequality between wards in the city.

The Commission monitors levels of electoral inequality for all local authorities in England on an annual basis. Its programme of reviews for the financial year 2015/16 was based on electorate data published in councils' electoral registers in February 2014. The data showed Ouseburn ward had an electoral variance of 34% thereby triggering one of the Commission's intervention criteria.

The Commission defines significant levels of electoral inequality as a situation where more than 30% of wards in that authority have an electoral variance of more than 10% from the average for that council. The Commission will also consider conducting a review where one or more wards deviates from the average by more than 30%.

One of the principal aims of the subsequent electoral review is to correct electoral variances so that each councillor represents roughly the same number of electors.

TRANSPORT

■ East Anglia Railway Line

Dr Poulter: [\[2535\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with Abellio Greater Anglia on taking steps to improve the Great Eastern Mainline Service from London to the East Anglian region.

Claire Perry:

Officials are in regular dialogue with Abellio Greater Anglia and are monitoring a range of actions and investments in rolling stock modifications aimed at improving performance and reliability. Abellio Greater Anglia are also in the process of refurbishing the carriages on London – Norwich services, bringing a new ambience for passengers including LED lighting and laptop power sockets to complement the existing on-train WiFi.

■ First Great Western

Lilian Greenwood: [\[3081\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he expects to make a decision on whether to grant First Great Western permission to order new trains to operate on its intercity routes to Devon and Cornwall; and whether he expects that permission will require a section 54 undertaking of the designation of such trains, or their lease agreement as a franchise asset.

Claire Perry:

We expect to receive final proposals from First Great Western and to make a decision over the summer. We do not anticipate that the proposals will require a Section 54 undertaking or designation as a franchise asset.

■ High Speed 2 Railway Line

Keir Starmer: [\[2856\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the cost of constructing High Speed 2 (a) Phase 1 and (b) Phase 2 is in 2015 prices.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Department does not currently hold information on the cost of the scheme in 2015 prices. Costs are consistently expressed in 2011 prices to aid transparency & comparability.

■ Level Crossings

Jim Shannon: [2673]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what guidance he has issued on improving safety for pedestrians at railway crossings.

Claire Perry:

Railway safety in Northern Ireland is a devolved matter and the responsibility of the Department for Regional Development.

The Office of Rail and Road, in its role as the independent railway safety regulator for Great Britain, has published guidance for those who design, install, operate and maintain level crossings to assist them in understanding risks and responsibilities. This is available from

http://orr.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/2158/level_crossings_guidance.pdf.

The Office of Rail and Road, and the Heritage Railway Association, have also worked with Network Rail to develop a range of guidance documents based on the type of user – pedestrian, driver, cyclist or horse rider. These are available from

www.networkrail.co.uk/level-crossings/using-level-crossings.

■ M56: Accidents

Justin Madders: [3171]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many road traffic accidents have happened on the M56 between junctions 12 and 14 in the last three years.

Andrew Jones:

The number of reported personal injury road accidents by severity on M56 between junctions 12 and 14 for the last three years is given in the following table:

NUMBER OF REPORTED PERSONAL INJURY ACCIDENTS ON M56 BETWEEN JUNCTIONS 12 - 14: 2011 - 2013

Year	Number of accidents			
	Fatal	Serious	Slight	Total
2011	0	0	11	11
2012	0	3	8	11
2013	1	1	20	22

Data for 2014 will be available on 26th June 2015 when it is first published. Damage only accidents are not collected by the Department.

■ Motorways: Repairs and Maintenance

Sir Greg Knight:

[2664]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will discuss with the Highways Agency the potential merits of introducing shorter stretches of roadworking on motorways.

Andrew Jones:

Highways England is working closely with the Department for Transport to progress various initiatives to improve the customer experience through roadworks. The government has announced a major investment in the strategic roads infrastructure which includes motorways. This will need to be carefully planned and managed, particularly in respect of length of roadworks and proximity of adjacent works to one another, to ensure the impact of construction on road users is minimised.

■ Motorways: Speed Limits

Sir Greg Knight:

[2663]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make it his policy to trial the use of variable temporary speed limits on sections of motorways involving roadworks to take account of the different road conditions at off peak times in order to reduce delays.

Andrew Jones:

Highways England has been tasked with improving and operating the Strategic Road Network. They are currently working on a number of projects looking at how the management of road works can be changed to deliver improvements for road users.

The varying of temporary speed limits in road works is currently not possible under existing legislation. However, Highways England is working closely with the Department for Transport to review the Motorway Regulations with the aim of updating them. One of the changes being considered would open the way for variable temporary speed limits in road works. Signing technology would also have to be developed and evaluated, particularly where gantries are not installed on certain motorway sections.

■ Network Rail

Lilian Greenwood:

[3117]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 17 June 2015 to Question 2371, what meetings (a) he, (b) other Ministers in his Department and (c) officials in his Department have held to discuss Network Rail since 1 March 2015; when each such meeting took place; and which organisations external to the core Department were present at each such meeting.

Mr Patrick McLoughlin:

Both my Ministerial colleagues and I, as well as Departmental officials, regularly hold meetings to discuss Network Rail operations. These can also involve interested external organisations.

■ Railway Stations: Disability

Fiona Bruce: [\[2375\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what extra funding he plans to make available for the Access to All programme in the current funding period.

Claire Perry:

We have made £160m available to extend the main Access for All programme until 2019, from its scheduled close in 2015. The 68 stations planned to benefit from this funding were announced last year.

A further £7.63m from the Access for All Small Schemes programme has been allocated to the Train Operating Companies to deliver station access improvements in the current financial year.

■ Railways: Greater London

Matthew Pennycook: [\[2982\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what meetings he has had with representatives of rail franchises operating in South London in the last 12 months.

Claire Perry:

During the last year, I and other transport Ministers have held regular meetings with the representatives of a number of train operating companies, including Southern, Southeastern, South West Trains and Govia Thameslink Railway.

My first priority in this new parliament is to see performance in the South East improve. We have been working closely with Mark Carne of Network Rail, the operators of Southeastern and Govia Thameslink Railway, and the current (and future) operator of Southern to review the work that Network Rail's senior team has undertaken on the past few weeks to improve performance in and on their network.

■ Railways: South East

Matthew Pennycook: [\[2984\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what (a) research and (b) information his Department holds on the performance of the (i) Southeastern and (b) Southern rail franchises.

Claire Perry:

The Department monitors daily and periodic performance reports from Network Rail and each individual Train Operating Company (TOC) and the information received in the National Rail Passenger Survey, published by Transport Focus, which provides information on passengers' views on the services of train operators.

■ Road Traffic: Borehamwood

Oliver Dowden:

[2472]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to help alleviate road congestion approaching the Stirling Corner roundabout; what discussions he has had with Transport for London on that congestion; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Transport for London (TfL) is responsible for this section of main road. TfL has informed the Department that it has been investigating a recent problem relating to faulty traffic signal equipment on the approach to Stirling Corner which has led to increased congestion in the area, and that it is making every effort to repair the fault as soon as possible.

■ Rolling Stock: Procurement

Lilian Greenwood:

[3080]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he has taken to encourage research and development into the production of new diesel multiple units by UK-based manufacturers.

Claire Perry:

The department sponsors the rail industry's FutureRailway programme which supports research, development and demonstration of innovative rail solutions. Recent FutureRailway initiatives, which have secured widespread interest and engagement from UK based suppliers, include a £4.5m competition to develop more energy efficient, self-powered trains and a successful trial of a battery powered train.

The Department for Transport is also working with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the Rail Supply Group to strengthen the UK rail supply chain – including the manufacture of rolling stock - so that it is better able to win work here and abroad.

■ Train Operating Companies

Lilian Greenwood:

[3072]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will take steps to include provisions on improving the quality of and access to training and continuing professional development for employees of train operating companies in all future franchise agreements.

Claire Perry:

Detailed decisions around staff training and capability rightly sits with the train operators. In recent competitions (see the Northern and TransPennine Invitations To Tender for the most recent examples) we have put additional requirements on bidders to work with staff to build capability and skills, encouraging train operators to think about these vital matters.

The rail industry is developing a comprehensive skills strategy identifying the key challenges facing the sector and focussing on those areas that will support growth and

productivity. This work has the support of my department, the Rail Delivery Group and the Rail Supply Group and will be co-ordinated by the National Skills Academy for Railway Engineering.

TREASURY

■ Alcoholic Drinks: VAT

John Healey: [\[3088\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will reduce the rate of VAT on (a) alcohol sold in the hospitality sector and (b) alcohol served with a meal in the hospitality sector.

Mr David Gauke:

The Government's position on this issue was set out during the Westminster Hall debate on this topic on 17 March 2015.

■ Banks: Fines

Mr Roger Godsiff: [\[2389\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 11 June 2015 to Question 1439, who is responsible for deciding to which charity or cause money received from bank fines is allocated.

Greg Hands:

Awards may be requested by a third party, such as a local campaigner or MP, on behalf of organisations.

The administration of fines varies according to the type of organisation receiving the money. In particular, where a Government Department such as the MoD has been identified as the organisation best suited to deliver the outcome, for example support for childcare at military establishments, normal Departmental processes have applied. In other circumstances such as those in support of the Armed Forces Covenant, the Covenant Reference Group, a cross-Whitehall representative body which includes charity representation, provides the guidance on those areas where funds could be used to best effect. All foreign exchange penalties received to date have been allocated to create a fund for advanced care in GP practices and community healthcare facilities.

The distribution of this funding is accounted for through the relevant department's annual report and accounts. These are audited by the National Audit Office. The Accounting Officer of the relevant department is responsible for ensuring that the funds are spent correctly.

■ Child Benefit: Greater Manchester

Andrew Gwynne: [\[2786\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many mothers with more than two children currently receive child benefit in (a) Denton and Reddish constituency, (b) Tameside local authority area and (c) Stockport local authority area.

Damian Hinds:

To provide an answer would come at a disproportionate cost.

■ **Children: Day Care**

Mrs Sharon Hodgson:

[2608]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the expected time taken will be for people to register for tax free childcare as a result of being required to send their children's birth certificate to HM Revenue and Customs.

Damian Hinds:

Registering for Tax-Free Childcare will be straightforward for parents. Using a simple online system, parents will be asked to identify themselves and the child for whom the childcare account is being opened. In most cases, this information will be processed and checked automatically.

In a minority of cases, HMRC may need to check the child's birth certificate. This process will be as efficient as possible to minimise any delay in the parent opening a childcare account.

■ **Economic Situation**

George Kerevan:

[3067]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent estimate his Department has made of the level of spare capacity in the economy; and on what analysis that estimate is based.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) produces the UK's official economic forecasts. The Bank of England Inflation Reports also publish an estimate of spare capacity in the UK economy.

■ **Environment Protection: Taxation**

David T. C. Davies:

[2435]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the trends in the (a) EU energy trading system price for carbon and (b) all-in UK carbon price, including the carbon price floor, were in the last six months.

Damian Hinds:

Rates of the UK-only carbon price are published on page A105 of the 2013 Budget's Overview Of Tax And Legislation

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/207419/022_fb20013_ootlar.pdf).

Budget 2014 announced a cap of the CPS rate at £18 per tonne of carbon between 2016/17 until the end of the decade, as shown on page A109 of the 2014 Budget's Overview Of Tax And Legislation

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/294190/OOTLAR_19_March_2014_1_.pdf). Recent trends in the EU ETS carbon price can be

found on the ICE Auction Platform's Report Centre at
<https://www.theice.com/marketdata/reports/148>

David T. C. Davies: [2752]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has to apply the UK carbon price floor to electricity imported through interconnectors which is generated by overseas fossil fuel plants; and if he will make a statement.

Damian Hinds:

The Carbon Price Floor is a tax levied on fossil fuels used to generate electricity in the UK only. The Government cannot apply it to imported electricity due to EU excise and energy tax directives. HMT keeps all taxes under review.

■ HSBC: Tax Avoidance

Louise Haigh: [2683]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 5 June 2015 to Question 261, when he plans to make a statement to the House on progress made with the inquiry into tax avoidance.

Louise Haigh: [2766]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 5 June 2015 to Question 261, when he plans next to update the House on progress with the inquiry into tax avoidance facilitated by HSBC.

Mr David Gauke:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has a strong track record of tackling those who have evaded their responsibilities or those who have facilitated tax evasion.

In this case, HMRC and other law enforcement agencies are still in the process of re-examining data, which can now be used for criminal purposes. This follows agreement to do so from the French Authorities. The results of the re-examination will require assessment and evaluation to determine the need for any criminal or civil investigations.

HMRC is working with a range of law enforcement agencies but is unable to provide a precise timescale for completion of the task.

Louise Haigh: [2684]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 5 June 2015 to Question 261, whether the inquiry into tax avoidance is receiving the cooperation of HSBC.

Mr David Gauke:

It is not possible for HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) to provide details of any contact with individuals or businesses.

■ Import Duties

Mr Christopher Chope: [\[3150\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what proportion of customs duties the UK contributed to the EU budget arose from (a) Africa, (b) Asia, (c) South America and (d) the Middle East in the last year for which information is available.

Damian Hinds:

The information requested could only be provided by 23 June at disproportionate cost.

Mr Christopher Chope: [\[3152\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the cost to UK manufacturers of customs duties imposed on their products by non- EU countries.

Damian Hinds:

HM Revenue and Customs has no current plans to make an assessment of the cost to UK manufacturers of customs duties imposed on their products by non-EU countries.

Mr Christopher Chope: [\[3161\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what proportion of the UK contribution to the EU budget for customs duties is attributable to (a) manufactured goods, (b) new materials and (c) agricultural produce.

Damian Hinds:

The information requested could only be provided by 23 June at disproportionate cost.

Mr Christopher Chope: [\[3203\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will set out the different rates of customs duty applied to imports into the UK and the nature of the goods to which each rate applies.

Damian Hinds:

Information on all of the different rates of customs duty applied on import into the UK and the nature of the goods to which rate applies is published in the Integrated Tariff of the United Kingdom. This is published in paper version by The Stationery Office Ltd and an electronic version is also available free of charge on the GOV.UK website.

■ Import Duties: Africa

Mr Christopher Chope: [\[3151\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if his Department will make an assessment on the UK economy of removing all custom duties on products from Africa.

Damian Hinds:

HM Revenue and Customs has no current plans to make an assessment on the UK economy of removing all customs duties on products from Africa.

■ Income Tax: Scotland

Hannah Bardell: [\[3046\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the income tax gap in Scotland in each of the last five years.

Mr David Gauke:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) published its latest tax gap estimates on 16 October 2014 in 'Measuring Tax Gaps' 2014 edition.

HMRC do not break down any of the estimates by country.

■ Income Tax: Self-employed

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[3255\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 15 June 2015 to Question 1915, what the total revenue collected in corporation tax for personal service companies was in each of the last five years.

Mr David Gauke:

There is no statutory definition of a personal service company. For this reason it is not possible to provide a reliable estimate of the number of personal service companies who paid corporation tax.

■ Lyon Office

Neil Gray: [\[2990\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what arrangements are in place for the transfer of fees paid to the Lord Lyon to his Department.

Damian Hinds:

The Court of the Lord Lyon is sponsored by the Scottish Government. Fees collected by the Court of the Lord Lyon are remitted to the Scottish Government on a monthly basis, with an annual income of around £70,000. This income is not transferred to the Treasury.

■ Married People: Tax Allowances

Margaret Hodge: [\[3017\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many households are in receipt of the married couple's allowance in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

Mr David Gauke:

Estimates of the number of households where an individual is in receipt of married couples allowance are not available.

■ Pensions

Ms Mhairi Black:

[2584]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps the Government is taking to protect pensioners with access to their defined contribution pension from being targeted by scams.

Harriett Baldwin:

Monitoring the market for scams and misselling is the responsibility of the regulators, the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and the Pensions Regulator. The FCA, in line with its remit to protect consumers and ensure markets function in consumers' interests, has specifically committed to monitoring developments in the retirement income market closely and to take action where consumers are coming to harm or where the market is not operating competitively. The Government remains in close contact with the regulators, and other organisations such as industry trade bodies, on these issues.

The FCA recently launched a new high-profile consumer awareness campaign around investment scams, ScamSmart, and the FCA and the Pensions Regulator, along with a number of other relevant organisations, have undertaken a joint publicity campaign to improve consumer awareness of pension scams.

Pension Wise, the Government's free and impartial guidance service, also helps individuals understand how to spot and avoid scams.

More widely, the Government will be launching a consultation next month to strengthen people's rights to access their pensions flexibly. The consultation will look at ways of making the process for transferring pensions from one scheme to another quicker and smoother and removing any unjustifiable barriers to doing so.

■ Revenue and Customs: Complaints

Louise Haigh:

[2713]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many complaints were made by businesses about the service provided by HM Revenue and Customs in each year since 2000.

Mr David Gauke:

The number of complaints received by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) is published in its annual reports. The figure for the year 2014/15 will be included in their next annual report.

■ Revenue and Customs: Sheffield

Louise Haigh:

[2764]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 5 June 2015 to Question 196, what consideration he plans to give to the effect on the local economy of closing HM Revenue and Customs offices in South Yorkshire.

Louise Haigh: [\[2803\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 5 June 2015 to Question 196, whether Sheffield is being considered as a Regional Centre office.

Louise Haigh: [\[2804\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 5 June 2015 to Question 196, how many Regional Centres he plans to establish.

Louise Haigh: [\[2805\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 5 June 2015 to Question 196, whether he expects there to be job losses as a result of moving the HM Revenue and Customs workforce into Regional Centre offices.

Louise Haigh: [\[2806\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 5 June 2015 to Question 196, whether new Regional Centre offices will be grouped by specialism.

Mr David Gauke:

No final decisions have yet been made as to where regional centres will be located. HM Revenue and Customs are currently considering the options and will make an announcement in due course.

■ Revenue and Customs: Staff

Louise Haigh: [\[2802\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 8 June 2015 to Question 200, how many inspectors of each (a) grade and (b) job title HM Revenue and Customs employed in each year since 2010.

Mr David Gauke:

The information is not available in the form requested, and could only be collected at a disproportionate cost.

■ Revenue and Customs: Telephone Services

Mr David Crausby: [\[2914\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the average number of calls made to HM Revenue and Customs helpline numbers about a single issue was before that issue was resolved in the last 12 months.

Mr David Gauke:

HM REVENUE AND CUSTOMS (HMRC) DOES NOT HOLD THIS INFORMATION, AND IT COULD ONLY BE COLLECTED AT DISPROPORTIONATE COSTS.

■ Royal Bank of Scotland

Stephen Gethins: [\[3228\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what representations he has made to the Royal Bank of Scotland on ensuring (a) pensioners and (b) other customers receive payments on time.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Government created a new, tough City regulator, the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), to protect customers and ensure Britain's banks conduct themselves to the highest standards. The FCA has been in contact with Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) regarding the recent IT issue affecting customer payments, and worked closely with the bank to resolve the problem. The payments issue has now been resolved, and the regulator will continue to work with RBS to diagnose and fix the root cause of the problem.

■ Tax Avoidance: Self-employed

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[3254\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 15 June 2015 to Question 1914, what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of the implementation of IR35 anti-avoidance legislation.

Mr David Gauke:

The government published a response to the House of Lords review of Personal Service Companies on the 9 June 2014.

■ Travel: Insurance

Margaret Ferrier: [\[3069\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what representations he has received on the practice of voided travel insurance policies as a result of alcohol consumption; and if he will make a statement.

Margaret Ferrier: [\[3070\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps the Government has taken to ensure that holidaymakers are treated fairly and equitably when they claim on the travel insurance policies they may take out.

Margaret Ferrier: [\[3071\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps the Government has taken to notify holidaymakers about the importance of taking out travel insurance when travelling abroad on holiday.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Government encourages travellers to obtain comprehensive travel insurance when travelling abroad and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has a 'Know Before You Go' communications campaign, which has been active since 2001. Messaging on insurance is prominent in many of our travel safety materials and we run specific

campaigns on insurance. In May this year we worked with the Association of British Insurers to create a new 'checklist' to help travellers choose the right insurance policy for their needs, which we communicated through social media and our network of industry partners.

The Government is determined that insurers should treat customers fairly and firms are required to do so under Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) rules. The FCA's Insurance Conduct of Business Sourcebook sets the conduct standards required of insurance firms in relation to their business, including travel insurance policies, which aim to ensure consumers are treated fairly.

■ VAT

Jim Shannon: [2674]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what guidance he has issued to small businesses on adherence to VAT legislation.

Mr David Gauke:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) provides a wide range of guidance for all businesses on VAT legislation and their tax obligations at:

www.gov.uk/business-tax/vat

This includes guidance on VAT simplification schemes for small businesses.

HMRC provides additional guidance and support through VAT webinars specifically tailored to meet the needs of small businesses. These cover key areas such as VAT registration, how to keep business records, what to charge VAT on and how and when to pay VAT to HMRC.

VAT webinars are delivered live, where attendees have the opportunity to ask HMRC Business Advisors questions, and are also available online as recorded versions so businesses can access them at any time and are supported by downloadable frequently asked questions.

■ Welfare Tax Credits: Overpayments

Mr Roger Godsiff: [2449]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to deal with concerns raised over the decision to use debt collection agencies to recover tax credit overpayments.

Mr David Gauke:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) meet with a range of stakeholders, including representative bodies, to discuss the implementation of new operational processes, where they feel it is appropriate to do so.

■ Welfare Tax Credits: Telephone Services

Mr David Crausby: [2915]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to reduce the length of time taken to answer calls to tax credit helplines.

Mr David Gauke:

The steps taken to reduce the length of time taken to answer calls to tax credit helplines is set out in the answer to questions number 58, given on 27 May 2015.

■ Working Tax Credit: North Wales

Mark Tami: [2647]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people qualify for working tax credit in each constituency in North Wales.

Mark Tami: [2648]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the 100 local authority wards are in North Wales with the highest number of people receiving tax credits.

Damian Hinds:

Detailed geographical information within local authority areas for the 2012-13 tax year detailing the number of families in receipt of tax credits in Wales can be found on gov.uk: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/personal-tax-credits-finalised-award-statistics-small-area-data-lsoa-and-data-zone-201213>.

Information relating to people qualifying for working tax credits in each constituency in North Wales is not available.

WALES

■ Wales Office: Buildings

Andrew Gwynne: [3112]

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, which buildings occupied by his Department are owned or part-owned privately; what the total value is of the rent paid to private landlords for the use of such buildings for official duties; and to whom such rent is paid.

Alun Cairns:

The Wales Office occupies two buildings; one in London and the other in Cardiff. The London building is owned by the Department, and we lease part of a privately owned building in Cardiff at a rental cost of £89,958 per annum. The rent for the Cardiff building is paid to Colliers International, the managing agents for the landlord.

WORK AND PENSIONS■ **Child Tax Credit**

Stephen Timms: [3243]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether he will estimate how many people who would otherwise be eligible for universal credit who would not be so eligible if the child element was reduced in real terms to the 2003-04 level of the child element of child tax credit.

Priti Patel:

It is not possible to provide estimates around a scenario that does not reflect current policy or plans.

Once fully rolled out Universal Credit will mean around 3.2 million households will be better off by an average of £178 a month.

■ **Children: Poverty**

Mr David Winnick: [3076]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the number of children in the borough of Walsall living in poverty in (a) households including a person who is in employment and (b) other households.

Priti Patel:

The Government does not produce child poverty statistics at a local authority level.

■ **Council Tax Benefits: Barking and Dagenham**

Margaret Hodge: [3014]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people were in receipt of council tax benefit in March 2013 in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

Justin Tomlinson:

The information requested is not available for March 2013.

Council Tax Benefit (CTB) was abolished in April 2013 and replaced by a system of localised support. In England, the Department for Communities and Local Government is now responsible for statistics. The Scottish and Welsh Governments have similar responsibility.

The available information relating to Council Tax Benefit up to February 2013 is shown in Table 10 of the publication available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-benefit-and-council-tax-benefit-caseload-statistics-published-from-november-2008-to-present>

■ **Department for Work and Pensions: Internet**

Richard Arkless: [3115]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment his Department has made of the usability of the Stat-Xplore website.

Justin Tomlinson:

Stat-Xplore forms part of the package which is used within the Department when publishing Official Statistics. It is used in conjunction with a Statistical First Release and set of summary statistical tables, with Stat-Xplore allowing users to construct their own bespoke statistical tables at very detailed level.

Stat-Xplore was updated in May 2015 to include new features and improvements, based on feedback from users.

A comprehensive user guide is available within the Stat-Xplore system which guides users through all the features of Stat-Xplore. In addition, a dedicated Stat-Xplore e-mail address allows users to send queries or requests for help in relation to Stat-Xplore.

Over 3,100 people have registered to use Stat-Xplore, and over 40,000 tables have been produced and downloaded by users since Stat-Xplore was launched in April 2013.

■ **Employment and Support Allowance**

Kate Green: [2777]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people in the work-related activity group for employment and support allowance have died while in receipt of that benefit.

Priti Patel:

I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 6 November 2014 to Question [UIN 212728](#)

■ **Employment and Support Allowance: Terminal Illnesses**

Kate Green: [2778]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people have been fast-tracked into the support group for employment and support allowance as a result of being terminally ill.

Kate Green: [2780]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of people are in the support group for employment and support allowance as a result of being terminally ill.

Priti Patel:

The number and percentage of people in the Support Group of Employment and Support Allowance, who are terminally ill, can be found in table 5 of the publication at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/employment-and-support-allowance-outcomes-of-work-capability-assessment>

■ Funerals

Ronnie Cowan: [2971]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will estimate the number of people who are unable to afford a low-cost funeral; and what steps his Department is taking to assist such people with funeral costs.

Justin Tomlinson:

The Government does not collect data on total numbers of people unable to afford a low-cost funeral.

The Social Fund Funeral Expenses Payment scheme provides help towards funeral costs. In 2013/14 over 33,000 awards were made to people in Great Britain. These payments were worth £44.7 million with an average award of £1,347. Social Fund Budgeting Loans are also available to help those on income related benefits to cover the costs relating to funeral expenses.

■ Housing Benefit

Caroline Lucas: [2538]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will increase the discretionary housing payments fund when the benefit cap is reduced to £23,000 per year; and if he will make a statement.

Justin Tomlinson:

Details of the policy will be announced in due course.

■ Housing Benefit: Barking and Dagenham

Margaret Hodge: [3019]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many housing benefit claimants there were in employment in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham in (a) 2014-15, (b) 2013-14, (c) 2012-13, (d) 2011-12 and (e) 2010-11.

Justin Tomlinson:

The information as requested is not available.

The Information for those in work is only available for Housing Benefit (HB) recipients whose claim is not passported: that is for those who do not receive either income support, Jobseeker's Allowance (Income-Based), Employment and Support Allowance (Income-Based), or Pension Credit (Guaranteed Credit). This information can be found at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk>

Guidance on how to extract the information required can be found at:

<https://sw.stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started---SuperWEB2.html>

■ Housing Benefit: Greater London

Stephen Timms:

[3259]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much has been awarded in discretionary housing payments by each local authority in London (a) in total, (b) to people affected by the household benefit cap, (c) to people affected by a reduction in local housing allowance rates and (d) to people affected by the under-occupancy penalty.

Justin Tomlinson:

The Department asks Local authorities to supply details of their use of Discretionary Housing Payments on a 6 monthly basis. Data for 2013/14 is provided at the link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/discretionary-housing-payments-statistics>

■ Housing Benefit: Young People

Dr Paul Monaghan:

[2465]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he plans to take to ensure that planned changes in entitlement to housing benefit for people aged under 22 do not adversely affect the (a) income and (b) access to housing of young adults.

Justin Tomlinson:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on the 15 June 2015 to Question [UIN 1696](#).

Caroline Lucas:

[2560]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 27 May 2015 to Question 144, what estimate his Department has made of the number of (a) claimants aged 18 to 21 with a dependent child and (b) dependent children who will be affected by the planned changes to housing benefit for people aged 18 to 21; and if he will make a statement.

Justin Tomlinson:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on the 15 June 2015 to Question [UIN 1696](#).

■ Local Housing Allowance

Stephen Timms:

[2421]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether he has made an assessment of the effect on tenants of capping housing allowance rate rises at one per cent per year.

Justin Tomlinson:

The Department has not made such an assessment since this measure was introduced, however an equality analysis was carried out during the policy development phase. The analysis was published in December 2013 on Gov.uk.

■ Personal Independence Payment: Renfrewshire

Gavin Newlands: [3137]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what average length of time applicants in Renfrewshire have waited for personal independence payment assessments since the start of their rollout.

Justin Tomlinson:

The available information on average (median) waiting times, at a national level, has been published and is available from the Personal Independence Payment statistics home page: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/personal-independence-payment-statistics>.

The Department is assessing the quality of the clearance time data at lower geographical levels and is considering the future release of such information into the public domain. These statistics will be published when they are ready, with the release pre-announced in line with United Kingdom Statistics Authority release protocols.

■ Private Rented Housing: Rents

Caroline Lucas: [2869]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will estimate in what proportion of broad market rental areas (a) a couple with children, (b) a single parent with three children and three bedrooms and (c) other families in households subject to the benefit cap at (i) £26,000 and (ii) £23,000 per year can afford average private sector rent.

Justin Tomlinson:

It is estimated around 86% of broad market rental areas in Great Britain are currently affordable for a single parent with three children and three bedrooms who are subject to the benefit cap at £26,000 per year. Affordability for (a) a couple with children and (c) other families in households subject to the benefit cap would depend on the number of children and the number of bedrooms the household has.

No households are subject to a £23,000 benefit cap.

■ Social Rented Housing: Barking and Dagenham

Margaret Hodge: [2969]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many social housing tenants are under the age of 65 in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

Margaret Hodge: [3015]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many social housing tenants paid the under-occupancy penalty in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham in the most recent period for which figures are available.

Margaret Hodge: [3021]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people were in receipt of housing benefit in (a) 2014-15, (b) 2013-14, (c) 2012-13, (d) 2011-12 and (e) 2010-11 in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

Margaret Hodge: [3025]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many housing benefit claimants there were under the age of 25 in (a) 2014-15, (b) 2013-14, (c) 2012-13, (d) 2011-12 and (e) 2010-11 in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

Justin Tomlinson:

The information requested in all four questions above is published and available at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk>

Guidance on how to extract the information required can be found at:

<https://sw.stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started---SuperWEB2.html>

■ Social Security Benefits

Dr Paul Monaghan: [2464]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the benefit cap will be lowered to for individual (a) young adults, (b) pregnant women, (c) veterans, (d) disabled people and (e) other vulnerable adults who have dependents who are not children.

Justin Tomlinson:

Details of the policy will be announced in due course.

Caroline Lucas: [2559]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will publish the information his Department holds on regional differences in the effect of the benefits cap on families of different sizes; and if he will make a statement.

Justin Tomlinson:

A suite of evaluation reports was published on 15 December 2014, finding those who would be impacted by the benefit cap were 41 per cent more likely to go into work and 38 per cent of those capped said they were doing more to find work. Further information can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/benefit-cap-evaluation>

Further statistics are available by location and family size at the following links:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/benefit-cap-number-of-households-capped-to-february-2015>

Kerry McCarthy: [3248]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will make an assessment of the feasibility of seconding Job Centre staff to do outreach sessions at food banks to support people who are experiencing problems with the administration of the welfare system.

Priti Patel:

Local Jobcentre Plus managers have the freedom to develop partnerships with a wide range of organisations based on local needs and circumstances.

Stephen Timms: [3260]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people affected by the household benefit cap who were placed by the local authority in temporary accommodation were placed outside their local authority area in (a) 2013, (b) 2014 and (c) 2015.

Justin Tomlinson:

The information is not available.

■ Social Security Benefits: Aberdeen

Kirsty Blackman: [2950]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people had their benefits sanctioned in Aberdeen in each of the last 12 quarters for which figures are available.

Priti Patel:

The latest available information on sanctions, up to December 2014, is published at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/> :

Guidance on how to extract the information required can be found at:

<https://sw.stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started---SuperWEB2.html>

■ Social Security Benefits: Ashfield

Gloria De Piero: [2387]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the number of households in Ashfield that would be affected by a household benefit cap of £23,000.

Justin Tomlinson:

We will publish a full Impact Assessment in due course.

Gloria De Piero: [2872]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many families in Ashfield constituency were in receipt of benefits in excess of £26,000 per year before the introduction of the benefits cap.

Justin Tomlinson:

The information requested is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ Social Security Benefits: Disqualification

Frank Field: [3263]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what sanctions have been issued by each Jobcentre Plus in each month in 2014.

Priti Patel:

The information available for the number and reason for referral, in respect of Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance sanction decisions, by Jobcentre Plus, is published at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/> :

Guidance on how to extract the information required can be found at:

<https://sw.stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started---SuperWEB2.html>

■ Social Security Benefits: East Lothian

George Kerevan: [3190]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people had their benefits sanctioned in East Lothian in each of the last 12 quarters for which figures are available.

Priti Patel:

The latest available information on sanctions, up to December 2014, is published at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/> :

Guidance on how to extract the information required can be found at:

<https://sw.stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started---SuperWEB2.html>

■ Social Security Benefits: Mental Illness

Natalie McGarry: [3126]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will estimate the number of claimants receiving benefits pertaining to a mental health condition who have been given an assessment of whether they are fit to work based only on their physical health.

Priti Patel:

The information requested is not available. The Work Capability Assessment assesses claimants for Employment and Support Allowance against a number of descriptors covering physical, mental, cognitive and intellectual functions.

■ Universal Credit

Frank Field: [2799]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many universal credit claimants have waited more than five weeks from making an application before receiving their first payment.

Priti Patel:

The information is not currently available.

Universal Credit is paid to claimants on a monthly basis. This monthly payment cycle mirrors the approach that claimants would experience in work and is designed to prepare claimants for employment. The first payment is made within a calendar month plus a week of the original date of claim, providing all the information required has been supplied by the claimant.

Debbie Abrahams:

[\[3192\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the pilot schemes aimed at in-work claimants.

Priti Patel:

The trial commenced on 20 April 2015 and therefore it is too early to make an assessment at this stage.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Telecommunications Council

Minister of State for Culture and the Digital Economy (Mr Edward Vaizey):

[\[HCWS50\]](#)

The Telecommunications Council took place in Luxembourg on 12th June 2015. I represented the UK and below are the agenda items and the positions, where applicable, I took on each of them. Please be aware that the order of the agenda, as laid out in the pre-Council statement was changed by the Latvian Presidency at the last minute. This statement reflects those changes.

The first item was an exchange of views on the Commissions Digital Single Market Strategy, which was published on 6th May. The debate was informed by two questions from the Presidency. My intervention was as per the pre-council statement. The Commission Vice President Ansip opened the debate by identifying 3 priorities for the Digital Single Market - Goods and services; infrastructure; and e-commerce and e-society. He also noted the need for progress on geographic price blocking. On copyright, he also suggested that more work was needed to harmonise exceptions currently invoked by member states.

Member State interventions covered a range of issues, including e-skills, infrastructure, e-commerce and the internet of things. Copyright and platform regulation were also two of the more commonly raised issues, with clear emerging divisions between Member States. The UK, Finland, Netherlands, Poland and Sweden also linked the Commission's better regulation agenda and the Digital Single Market, noting the benefits of industry-led approaches where possible.

The second item was for Council to reach agreement for a General Approach on the proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a programme on interoperability solutions for European public administrations, businesses and citizens (ISA2 - First reading - EM11580/14). As per my pre-council statement, I abstained from voting for the general approach. However, the rest of Council agreed to the general approach and this approach will now form the basis of the Council discussions going forward.

I hope that the improvements to the text that could not be agreed in Council will be made during the trilogue negotiations, so that the UK may support the proposal when it comes to final agreement. The UK continues to encourage the inclusion of more tangible efforts to make ISA2 a more effective programme, including clearer prioritisation and evaluation of programme actions based on user needs and clearer analysis of how actions support efforts in other parts of the Commission.

The Presidency then presented a progress report on the Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the accessibility to public sector bodies' web-sites (First reading - EM16006/11). There was no debate on this item..

This was followed by the adoption of draft council conclusions on the transfer of the stewardship of the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) functions to the multi-stakeholder community. Council agreed to the adoption of these conclusions and there was no debate on this item.

There were three items under AOB on the agenda. The first two items were information from the Presidency on the 'state of play' on negotiations regarding 'A Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down measures concerning the European single market for electronic communications and to achieve a Connected Continent' (EM13562/13 and 13555/13 + ADDs 1-2) and information from the Presidency on a Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning measures to ensure a high level of network and information security across the Union (NIS Directive). (First reading – EM6342/13). The Presidency updated Council on the progress of both, which are each in the middle of trilogue negotiations between the Council, Parliament and Commission. There was no substantive debate on either of these items and I did not intervene.

As noted in my pre-council statement, the readout from the Presidency on the Connected Continent package was informed by the informal Ministerial breakfast whose aim was to reach political agreement on the Regulation.

At this breakfast, Council could not reach such an agreement and the negotiation of this package therefore continues. At the breakfast, I intervened as per my pre-council statement, especially pushing the cessation of EU roaming charges in the near future and the importance of a future-proof approach to net neutrality. I was given strong support on this approach by Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands. However, the majority of Council did not agree with this approach.

Finally, under AOB, the Luxembourg delegation informed the Council of their priorities for their forthcoming Presidency before Council adjourns until the next meeting in quarter four 2015.

HOME OFFICE

■ Justice & Home Affairs post-Council Statement

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mrs Theresa May): [\[HCWS52\]](#)

The Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Council took place on 15 and 16 June in Luxembourg. My Right Honourable Friend, Lord Faulks QC, Minister for Civil Justice and I attended on behalf of the United Kingdom. The following items were discussed.

Justice Day started with the Latvian Presidency securing a General Approach on the Data Protection Regulation, following three and a half years of negotiations. The UK supported the text as a basis for negotiations with the Parliament, however, UK support had a number of caveats. The UK stressed the need for a balanced instrument that strengthens privacy rights in a simple, coherent and informed way and does not threaten innovation or the success of the Digital Single Market. The UK also voiced strong concerns on the effect on SMEs and other business, about the overly bureaucratic “one stop shop” model, and the

threats posed to freedom of expression by the so-called "right to be forgotten", which the UK opposes on principle. The UK sees no justification for an expanded right such as that contained in the Data Protection Regulation.

Luxembourg, as the incoming Presidency, stressed that it would keep all of these concerns in mind during trilogue negotiations. Luxembourg is committed to keeping both the Regulation and Directive (covering personal data processed for investigating and prosecuting crime) together as a package, with the aim of full agreement on both instruments by the end of the year.

This was followed by agreement on a General Approach on the Simplification of Public Documents Regulation. The Council supported the Presidency compromise text, with many States noting that this helped to remove barriers and administrative burdens within the internal market. The UK and Ireland highlighted the importance of equal respect for common law and civil law traditions. The incoming Luxembourg Presidency would take forward trilogue negotiations with the European Parliament on the basis of this General Approach.

Over lunch, justice-related aspects of the Commission's Digital Single Market Strategy were discussed. The Commission wanted clear, simple and legally certain rules, with targeted legislation to harmonise only where there were gaps; they stressed they were not seeking a repeat of the proposed Common European Sales Law. The UK highlighted domestic legislation on online purchases of digital content and the UK's vibrant e-commerce sector, suggesting that this model could be a useful starting point for EU-level work. The UK emphasised that work on these proposals should respect better regulation principles, including appropriate consultations and impact assessments. The UK also raised combating illegal content online, arguing that a voluntary removals approach, working with industry, had greater global reach than legislation and could deliver more effective results on removals.

On the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO), Ministers agreed "broadly expressed conceptual support" for the text of Articles 1 to 16 of the draft Regulation which cover the balance of power between the central office and delegated prosecutors. The UK reminded Member States that we would not

participate in this measure.

Under AOB, the Presidency noted progress on the Data Protection Directive and work with the European Parliament to reach a compromise on the Small Claims Regulation. The Presidency and the Commission updated the Council on the recent EU-US JHA Summit in Riga. The Commission highlighted cooperation with the US on combating money laundering and terrorist financing, as well as progressing on the data-related Umbrella Agreement and Safe Harbour.

The incoming Luxembourg Presidency, starting in July, presented its priorities for the justice field: the two main priorities would be data protection and the European Public Prosecutor's Office. Linked to the European Public Prosecutor, they planned to drive forward progress on

the draft PIF ("Fraud against the EU's financial interests") Directive and Eurojust Regulation. In Civil law, they would introduce proposals on family law and continue work on the simplification of public documents. A motion underlining the Council's will to move towards EU accession to the European Convention on Human Rights would be put to the October JHA Council. Finally, the Luxembourg Presidency said they planned to present a proposal to improve political discussions at Council at their Informal JHA Council meeting in July.

The Interior session began with a policy debate on migration. While there was broad support for elements of the Commission's European Agenda on Migration, there was no agreement on the relocation proposal. The Commission pointed to the development of 'hotspots' to ensure processing of arriving migrants, beginning in Sicily, and progress on the proposed 'multi-purpose centre' in Niger to try to mitigate flows through that country, alongside enhanced efforts to combat the facilitators. The European External Action Service (EEAS) confirmed that the first phase of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) mission in the Mediterranean would be launched shortly. The UK joined other Ministers in emphasising the need to tackle the root causes of migration, to tackle people smugglers and traffickers, and to break the link between rescue at sea and the expectation of remaining in the EU by returning economic migrants while supporting their reintegration in their home countries. The UK also recalled the European Council's clear agreement that EU relocation and resettlement schemes should be voluntary rather than mandatory.

The incoming Luxembourg Presidency gave a presentation which confirmed the following priorities in the area of migration: more effective returns including use of readmission agreements; progress on operational proposals such as the centre in Niger and 'hotspots'; agreement to the draft Regulation currently under negotiation that would clarify the treatment of minors under the Dublin Regulation and political agreement on the Visa Package and the Students and Researchers Directive. Other priorities included: combating terrorism (in particular dealing with the threat from foreign fighters), implementing the new Internal Security Strategy, concluding trilogues on the Europol Regulation, and seeking agreement with the European Parliament on the Passenger Name Records (PNR) Directive by the end of the year.

During lunch there was a discussion on Returns which saw broad agreement that greater ambition was required in this area as part of the comprehensive approach on migration. More effective EU readmission arrangements were seen as an important element.

The Council Conclusions on the Internal Security Strategy were adopted without substantive discussion.

The Presidency presented papers which updated Ministers on progress since the 12 February Informal European Council Statement on the EU response to the Paris terrorist attacks.

The Commission (Avramopoulos) drew attention to its Communication 'The European Agenda on Security' and highlighted that in the short term Counter Terrorism (CT) priorities included: a high level Internet Industry Forum event in the Autumn; making the Europol Internet Referrals Unit (IRU) operational as quickly as possible; swift adoption of an efficient and legally sound EU PNR Directive; and preparing for a revision of the EU Framework Decision on Terrorism.

The EU CT Coordinator (Giles de Kerchove) called for detailed planning on handling the increasing wave of European returnees from Syria/Iraq. This meant investing now in exit and rehabilitation programmes and supporting Commissioner Jourová work on prison radicalisation. In his view, the EU also needed to find the resources to enable Europol, Eurojust and CEPOL to enhance cooperation and capacity building in third countries.

The UK welcomed progress on the Europol Internal Referral Unit (IRU) and announced a UK secondee into the unit. The UK also praised the work of the Syria Strategic Communication Advisory Team (SSCAT). Whilst welcoming the Commission's action in establishing the Industry Forum, the UK cautioned that certain aspects of tackling terrorist abuse of the internet (including encryption and interception) were matters of national security and thus for Member States rather than the EU. The UK called for robust minimum standards on legislation on firearm deactivation; for enhanced data sharing on illegal firearms and ammunition; and for the Commission to step up its work on proactive sharing of criminal records via the European Criminal Records Information System (ECRIS). Finally, the UK again underlined the urgency of adopting, with the European Parliament, a strong and effective PNR framework, including intra-EU PNR, before the end of the year.

Europol drew attention to the excellent cooperation it has received from Member States' intelligence agencies. Europol also reported significant increases in the use of their existing CT tools. Most notably, this included the Terrorist Finance Tracking Programme (TFTP) which had led to 3000 separate intelligence leads since the Paris attacks (some 1500 of which were related to foreign fighters). Europol was on track to establish the IRU by 1 July and had worked constructively with social media companies in recent months.

The Presidency urged renewed vigour to implement the post-Paris conclusions in order to keep pace with the threat. The Presidency would report the priorities outlined during the debate (and those identified in the Internal Security Strategy Council Conclusions) as the JHA Council's input to the June European Council's review of the post-Paris Statement it agreed in February.

Under AOB, the Commission provided a brief overview of the bi-annual report on the functioning of the Schengen area, noting that Schengen was the solution not the problem providing that all Member States fully applied the rules of the Schengen acquis. The Commission also confirmed that a new Smart Borders proposal would be published following the results of the pilot phase. The Presidency provided an update on the EU-US Ministerial meeting which took place in Riga on 2/3 June; this agreed a Statement defining the common EU-US JHA agenda over the next five years. The Presidency also provided an update on ongoing legislative negotiations including on the European Police College (CEPOL) and the European Union's law enforcement agency (EUROPOL) Regulations and the Students and Researchers Directive.

SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE ON THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION**■ Report on the spending and regulation of the campaigners at the Scottish independence referendum**

Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission (Mr Gary Streeter):
[\[HCWS49\]](#)

The Electoral Commission has today published a report in the Scottish Parliament on its analysis of the spending and regulation of campaigners at the Scottish independence referendum.

This is the Electoral Commission's second report on the referendum and fulfils its statutory duty to report to the Scottish Parliament, under the provisions of the Scottish Independence Referendum Act 2013 (SIRA), on the use of its investigatory powers and civil sanctions. For further background and information on the wider context of the referendum on independence for Scotland, this report should be read in conjunction with the report the Commission published in December 2014 on the conduct of the referendum, which is available on its website and copies of which were placed in the House Library on its publication.

This report analyses the funding and spending of those people and organisations that registered to campaign at the independence referendum. It builds on last December's report and makes further recommendations for the future based on the information campaigners were required to submit in their post-referendum returns. These additional recommendations are intended to inform the regulation of future referendums, not only in Scotland, but elsewhere in the UK including an EU referendum.

SIRA contained a number of rules drawn from those that applied at the 2011 referendums on increased powers for the National Assembly for Wales and the UK-wide referendum on the UK Parliamentary Voting Systems. These rules clarified aspects of the regulatory controls, reduced burdens on those that wished to campaign and ensured that voters had access to the information that would enable them to make an informed decision when they voted. Overall, the Commission concludes that the regulatory controls that applied at the independence referendum worked well and improved on the rules from previous referendums.

After the independence referendum, registered campaigners were required to submit a campaign spending return to the Commission. The returns included details of the spending that the campaigners incurred campaigning at the referendum and all donations and loans they accepted over £7,500. Campaigners were also required to provide a total figure of the donations and loans they received over £500 but below £7,500. Anything with a value of £500 or less was not counted as a donation or loan for the purposes of the referendum rules.

The report shows that 42 campaigners registered with the Commission, 21 indicating they supported the yes outcome to the question asked, 21 supporting the no side. Registered campaigners reported spending a total of £6,664,980 campaigning at the independence referendum and reported having received donations and loans totalling £7,318,545.

SIRA also gave the Commission the role of monitoring and taking steps to ensure compliance with the referendum campaign rules. To enable the Commission to undertake that role, it had access to investigatory and sanctioning powers. The report finds that the Commission's powers under SIRA enabled it to effectively investigate matters. Whilst the Commission found that it was able to obtain the information that it required through voluntary co-operation with campaigners, it also sets out that the powers SIRA provided it were useful to point to as part of its discussions with campaigners.

Copies of the Commission's report have been placed in the library and it is also available on the Commission's website: www.electoralcommission.org.uk

TREASURY

■ Ecofin : 19 June 2015

First Secretary of State and Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr George Osborne):
[[HCWS47](#)]

A meeting of the Economic and Financial Affairs Council was held in Luxembourg on 19 June 2015. Ministers discussed the following items:

Bank Structural Reform:

Council reached a General Approach on this file.

European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI):

Ministers were updated by the Presidency on progress in relation to the EFSI. The Council Presidency anticipate reaching a First Reading agreement on the Regulation by the end of June

Administrative Cooperation:

Ministers held an exchange of views on the Presidency proposal on mandatory automatic exchange of information on tax rulings.

Interest and Royalties Directive:

Ministers held an exchange of views on the Presidency compromise on the proposal for a common system of taxation applicable to interest and royalty payments made between associated companies of different Member States.

Current Legislative Proposals:

The Presidency gave a state of play update on current legislative proposals in the field of financial services.

Commission Communication on corporate taxation:

The Commission presented the main elements of the Action Plan on corporate taxation, which was released on 17 June.

Implementation of Banking Union:

The Commission updated the Council on the status of implementation of the Banking Union, focusing on the ratification of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Single Resolution Fund and implementation of the Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive.

Capital Markets Union:

Council adopted Council Conclusions on Capital Markets Union.

Contribution to the European Council Meeting on 25-26 June 2015: European Semester:

Council discussed Country Specific Recommendations and prepared a discussion for the June European Council on the European Semester.

Contribution to the European Council Meeting on 25-26 June 2015: Broad Economic Policy Guidelines:

Council adopted a report to the European Council on the recommendations on Broad Economic Policy Guidelines.

Contribution to the European Council Meeting on 25-26 June 2015: Report on preparing for next steps on better economic governance in the euro area:

Council received a state of play update on the report on preparing for next steps on better economic governance in the euro area.

Implementation of the Stability and Growth Pact:

Council adopted Council Decisions and Recommendations in the context of the Excessive Deficit Procedure.

■ **Equitable Life Payments Scheme progress report June 2015**

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury (Harriett Baldwin): [\[HCWS48\]](#)

As of 31 May 2015, the Scheme has now issued payments totalling over £1.06 billion to 902,508 policyholders. The Scheme will today be publishing a further progress report, which can be found at www.gov.uk/equitable-life-payment-scheme.

87% of eligible policyholders have now been traced and had a payment issued; this represents nearly 92% of the total amount estimated to be due to policyholders.

The Scheme encourages any policyholders who believe themselves to be eligible to call the Scheme on 0300 0200 150. The Scheme can verify the identity of most policyholders on the telephone, which means any payment due can usually be received within two weeks.

■ **Implementation of EU Payment Accounts Directive**

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury (Harriett Baldwin): [\[HCWS51\]](#)

I am today publishing a consultation on the draft Payment Accounts Regulations 2015.

The Regulations make provision regarding the transparency and comparability of fees charged in relation to payment accounts; payment account switching and access to payment accounts with basic features for all consumers legally resident within the EU.

The Regulations are required in order to implement the requirements of the Payment Accounts Directive (2014/92/EU) ("PAD") which was adopted on 23 July 2014. In order to meet treaty obligations, EU Member States must implement the majority of the measures set out in PAD by 18 September 2016.

The Government has already taken forward a number of initiatives for the purposes of improving the experience of UK current account customers. For example, the 7-day Current Account Switch Service (CASS) supports current account switching and basic bank accounts have been available in the UK for over ten years, most recently augmented by the December 2014 agreement concluded by the nine largest providers of current accounts in the UK. That new agreement clarified and improved the terms upon which basic bank accounts are offered.

To complete the transposition of PAD, the UK must establish these initiatives in legislation and amend existing legislation related to the provision and regulation of payment accounts. However, due to the measures that the UK already has in place, the proposed Regulations aim to minimise any negative impact on structures and services that are working well.

PAD allows Member States to extend provision in a number of areas. Under the draft Regulations, application will not be extended beyond what is necessary.

The exception to this is Chapter IV of PAD (payment accounts with basic features), where UK policy on basic bank accounts is more developed than that set out in the Directive. As a result, the Government intends to implement PAD in such a way as to preserve the UK's existing basic bank account policy, while creating the necessary legal certainty for consumers required by PAD.

The consultation closes on 3 August. The consultation document is available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/latest?departments%5B%5D=hm-treasury>.